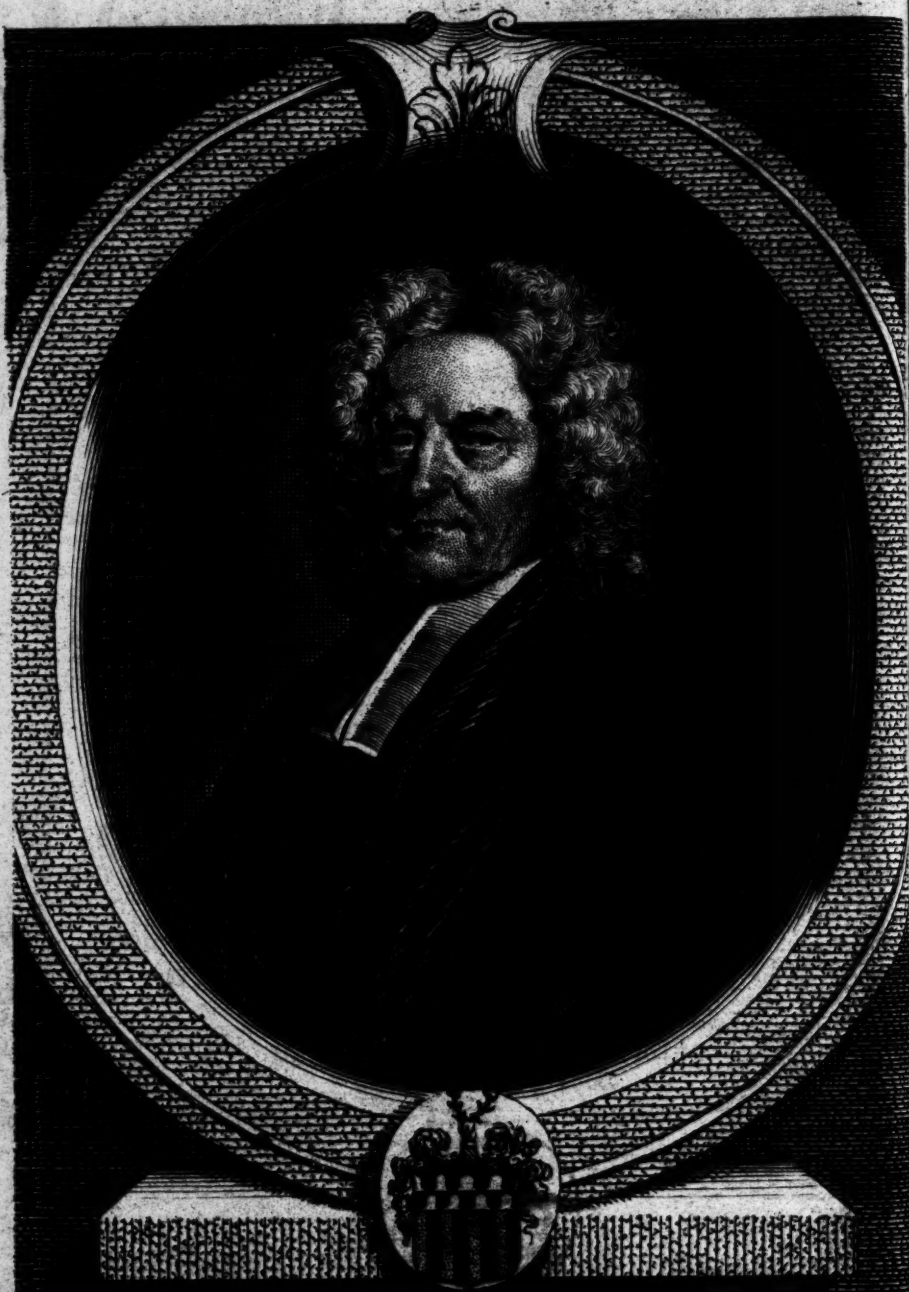


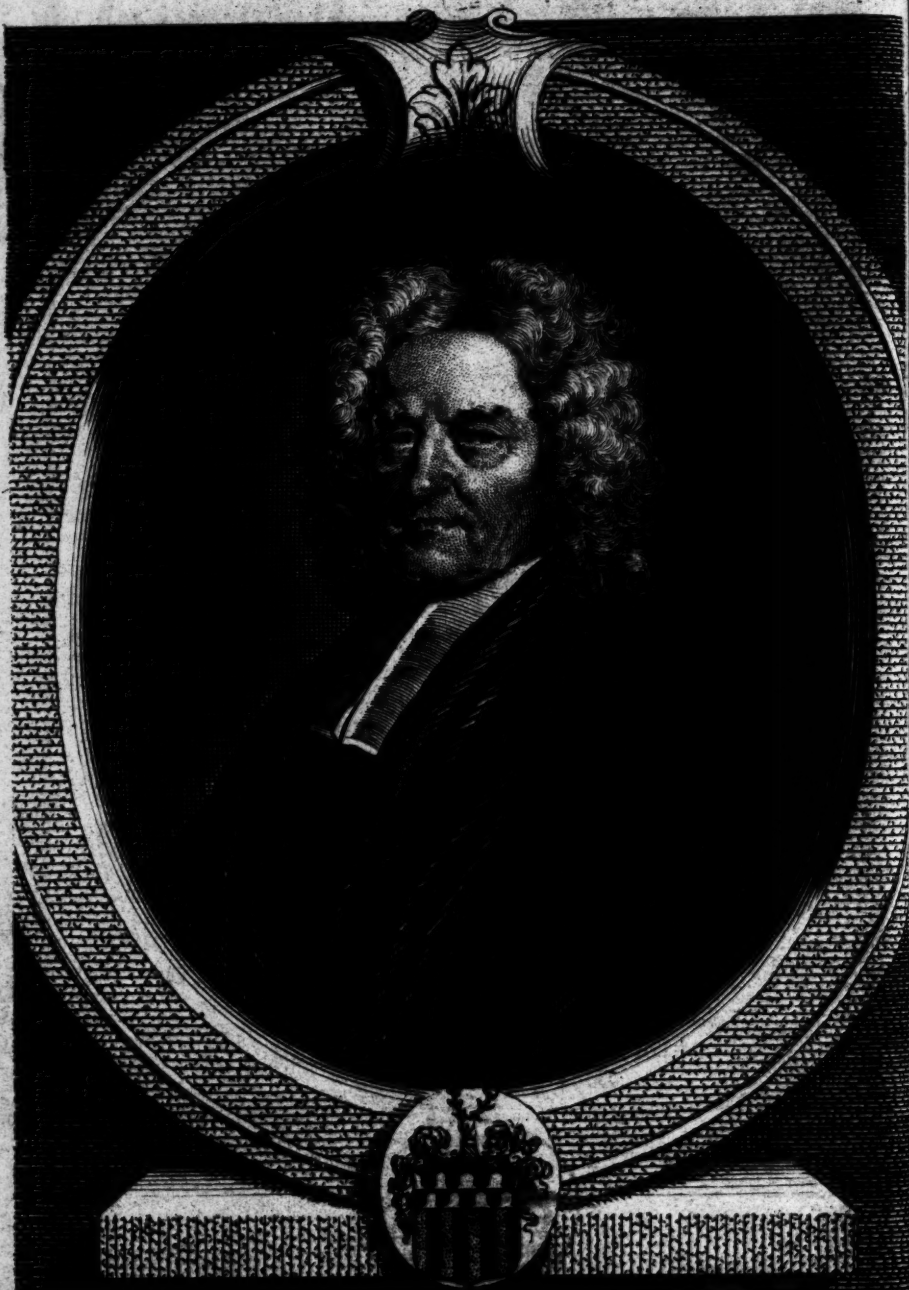


LUDOVICVS ATTERBURY LLD

*de Shepperton et Hornsey in
Comit. Middx. Rector. Aetate 74.*

T. Gibson pinx.

G. Vertue Sculp.



LUDOVICVS ATTERBURY LLD

*de Shepperton et Hornsey in
Comit. Middx. Rector. Aetate 74.*

T. Gibson pinx.

G. Vertue Sculp.

224 h 16
S E R M O N S

O N

SELECT SUBJECTS.

By LEWIS ATTERBURY, LL.D.

One of the Preaching CHAPLAINS

To their Late MAJESTIES

Queen ANNE and King GEORGE I.

IN TWO VOLUMES.

Now first Published from the ORIGINALS;

With a BRIEF ACCOUNT

OF THE

A U T H O R.

By EDWARD YARDLEY, B.D.

Archdeacon of Cardigan.

VOL. I.

LONDON:

Printed for THOMAS OSBORNE, in Gray's-Inn,
M.DCC.XLIII.



A Brief A C C O U N T
OF THE
A U T H O R
OF THE
Following S E R M O N S.

WHILST I comply with the Request of the Book-feller, in saying something of the late Rev. Dr. *Lewis Atterbury*, whose S E R M O N S are here presented to the World : I must request the Reader not to expect a compleat Life of him, but only a short Relation of such Particulars, as a personal Conversation with him for several Years, and the Papers I have by me, have furnished me with.

THE Family of *Atterbury* hath flourished for many Years in *Northamptonshire*: The Grandfather of our Author was one of the many Children of *Lewis Atterbury*, of *Great-Houghton*, in the said County. This Person, whose Name was *Francis*, was a Reverend Clergyman, Rector of *Middleton-Malsor*, in his native County; he was an eloquent, judicious, and useful Preacher, as appears by what I have seen of his Writings, and left behind him the Character of a worthy and good Man.

HIS Son, *Lewis Atterbury*, was educated at *Christ's-Church*, in *Oxford*, * became *A. B.* 23 Feb. 1649, and was 1 March 1651, † admitted or created *A. M.* by Virtue of a Dispensation from the Chancellor of that University. He was admitted in the Year 1654, Rector of *Great or Broad-Risington*, in the Diocese and County of *Gloucester*, and, after the Restoration, took a Presentation for that Benefice under the Great-Seal, and, was instituted again to confirm his Title to it ‡. On

* Gen. Diction.

† Athen. Oxon. Vol. II. p. 777.

‡ Original Instruments in my Custody.

of the AUTHOR.

On 11 Sept. 1657, he was admitted Rector of *Milton-Keynes*, otherwise *Middleton-Keynes*, in the County of *Bucks*, and took the same Method of corroborating his Title to this Living at the King's Return. Soon after which (25 July 1660,) he was made Chaplain Extraordinary to *Henry*, Duke of *Gloucester*; and, on 1 Dec. of the same Year, was || created Doctor in Divinity, and published afterwards three occasional Sermons in the Years 1684, 1685, and 1691. He died in December 1693 †.

DR. *Lewis Atterbury*, the Elder, married *Elizabeth*, the Daughter of *Thomas Giffard*, of *North-Crowly*, in the County of *Bucks*, Esq; by *Elizabeth*, the Daughter of *Edmond Harding*, of *Asply*, in the County of *Bedford*, Esq; by his said Wife he had two Sons, the Younger of which was *Francis Atterbury*, D.D. who was successively Archdeacon of *Totness*, Dean of *Carlisle*, *Christ-Church Oxford*, and *Westminster*, and Bishop of *Rochester*: A Person as remarkable for the Endowments

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of

|| Oxford Catalogue, and Athen. Oxon. Vol. II. p. 805. First Edit.

† General Dictionary.

A Brief Account

of Nature, and the Acquirements of Learning, as he was unfortunate in the latter Part of his Life, in being deprived of his Preferment, and banished out of his native Country. A Pen like his own should write his Life: I shall only acquaint the Reader, that he was § born at *Milton-Keynes*, in *Buckinghamshire*, the 6th, and baptized the 17th of *March Anno Dom. 1662*, and died at *Paris* the 15th of *February 1731* †.

Lewis, the elder Brother, was born at *Caldecot*, in the Parish of *Newport-Pagnel*, in the County of *Bucks* ‡, the 2d of *May Anno Dom. 1656*. He was educated at *Westminster School*, under the celebrated *Dr. Richard Busby*, between whom and the Father of our Author there was a Friendship and Intimacy. In the 18th Year of his Age he was sent to *Christ-Church, Oxford*, and matriculated || in that Uni-

§ *Milton Register*, and a Letter of Bishop *Atterbury*.

† The *Gen. Dict.* makes the Bishop die, *Feb. 15, 1732*, but falsely, unless they compute the Year from the first of *January*; for he survived his Brother but a few Months, from *October 1731*, to the *February* following.

‡ *Newport-Pagnel Register*.

|| Certificate in my Hands.

of the AUTHOR.

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University, 10 April 1674 Mr. George Walls (afterwards Dr. Walls *) was his Tutor. He was (being then A. B.) ordained Deacon at *Christ's-Church*, by the pious and learned Dr. *John Fell*, then Bishop of *Oxon*, and (as Commendatory Dean) Governor of that Royal College, † on the 21st of Sept. 1679. He commenced A. M. 5 July 1680 ‡, and, the next Year, received the Order of Priesthood in *Buckden Church*, from the Hands of Dr. *Thomas Barlow*, the then Right Rev. Bishop of *Lincoln*, as appears from the following Certificate, the Original of which is in my Hands, by which the World will see what Hopes that Prelate then entertained of this young Divine.

Nov. 2 1682.

* THESE are to certify those whom
 * it may concerne, that Mr. *Lewis*
 * *Atterbury*, Maister of Arts, of *Christ-*
 * *Church*, in the Universitie of *Oxon*, was
 * ordained Priest by the now Bishop of
 * *Lincolne*, Sept. 25. 1681. When it did
 * appear by his good Testimonials, and his

A 4

Ex-

* Letter of Bishop *Atterbury*, and *Oxford Catalogue*.

† Letters of Orders.

‡ *Oxford Catalogue*.

Examination, that he was a Person (both
 for Life and Learning) capable and worthy
 of Orders, and it did further appeare, by
 a good and pious Sermon he then preach-
 ed before the said Bishop, that he was
 able to execute the ministeriall Function
 with Benefit to any Congregation, to the
 Cure of which Providence should call him.
 This Truth beeinge well knowne to me,
 is testified under the Hand and Seale of

Thomas, Lincoln.

In the Year 1683, he performed the
 Office of Chaplain to Sir *William Pritchard*,
 Knt. then Lord Mayor of *London*.

In the Month of *Feb.* 1684, † he was
 instituted Rector of *Sywell*, in the County
 of *Northampton*; which Living he after-
 wards resigned, upon his accepting of o-
 ther Preferment.

On the 8th of *July* 1687, he took,
 by Accumulation ‡, the two Degrees of
 Batchelor and Doctor in the Civil Law.

THE

† Instruments.

‡ Oxford Catal.

of the AUTHOR.

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THE Year after this, he changed his Condition, and, on the 27th of *December* 1688 ||, married *Penelope*, the Daughter of Mr. *John Bedingfield*, Brother to Sir *Robert Bedingfield*, Knt. Lord Mayor of *London*, in the Year 1707. They were Sons of *John Bedingfield* of *Halsworth*, in the County of *Suffolk* Gent. who was the third Son of *Thomas Bedingfield* in the said County, Esq;

THE Mother of the said *Penelope* was Widow of *John Porter*, Esq; and Daughter of Sir *Francis Williamson*, Knt.

OF this Marriage came two Sons, who died in their Infancy. A Daughter, named after her Mother, born 15 *June* 1699, who married Mr. *George Sweetapple*, of *St. Andrew's Holborn*, Brewer, and died in *August* 1725, leaving one Daughter, who lived to be Heir to her Grandfather's Fortune, but died about seven Months after him, 3 *June* 1732, in the 11th Year of her Age.

A THIRD

Certificate.

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A THIRD Son he had, named *Bedingfield Atterbury*, who was born 8 Jan. 1693. and, after a School Education at *Westminster*, was admitted at *Christ-Church, Oxford*, and matriculated †, 9 April 1712. There he studied, till he ‡ commenced A. M. 20 June 1718, and took Deacon's Orders. Those, who knew him, give him the Character of a sober, modest, and ingenious young Gentleman: But the Hopes, which his Parents and Friends conceived of him, were soon disappointed, for he died of the Small-Pox, 27 December 1718.

THE Mother, grieved for the Loss of her favourite Son, did not many Years survive him, for she died the first of May Anno Dom. 1723.

HAVING thus given some Account of his Family and Off-spring, in one View, I return back to the Father of them, whom I find, in 1691, Lecturer || of *St. Mary-Hill*, in *London*, and, not long after his Marriage, settled at *Highgate*, where he supplied the Pulpit of the Rev. Mr. *Daniel Latbom*,

† Certificate. ‡ Oxford Catalogue. | Gen. Dict.

of the A U T H O R.

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Latham, who was very old, and laboured under the Misfortune of the Loss of his Sight. Upon the Death of this Gentleman, our Doctor was, 16 Jun. 1695, by the unanimous Votes of the six Governors, or Trustees, of *Highbgate Chapel*, elected † to be their Preacher; and this Office he held to the Time of his Death.

BUT before this he became one of the six preaching Chaplains to her Royal Highness the Princess *Anne* of *Denmark* at *Whitehall* and *St. James's*, which Place he continued to supply after she came to the Crown, and likewise during Part of the Reign of *King George I.*

WHEN he first resided at *Highbgate*, he observed what Difficulties the Poor in the Neighbourhood then underwent for the Want of a good Physician or Apothecary, and therefore he set himself in good Earnest to the Study of Physic, and, having attained a good Skill therein, practised it (*gratis*) occasionally amongst his poor Neighbours.

IN

† Certificate.

IN the Year 1707, the Rectory of *Shepperton*, in the County of *Middlesex*, lapsed to the Queen, the Incumbent thereof becoming deprived for neglecting to take the Oaths within the Time limited by the Laws. Upon this, his Royal Mistress presented Dr. *Atterbury* to this Cure, and he was instituted Rector, 30 Sept. in the same Year. †

ON the 3d of March, 1719, Dr. *John Robinson*, then Lord Bishop of *London*, collated our Author to the Rectory of *Hornsey*, in the County of *Middlesex*, || which was the more agreeable to him, because the Chapel of *Highgate* is situate in that Parish, and many of his constant Hearers became now his Parishioners.

HE never rose to any Dignity in the Church, though it might perhaps have been expected from the Interest of his Brother, whilst in Place and Favour.

IT is certain the Doctor applied for the Archdeaconry of *Rocheſter*, in the Bishop's own Gift, and had some Encouragement

† Original Instruments. || Ibid.

ment from his Lordship, though he did not succeed in it. I shall let the Reader into this Affair, by presenting him from the Originals with the following Letters between the two Brothers, which will at the same Time give him a Specimen of their Manner of writing in an Epistolary Way.

To the Right Reverend the Lord Bishop of Rochester.

Dear Brother,

‘ I T is reported that the Archdeacon (of
 ‘ *Rochester*) is dead, and I have sent
 ‘ my Servant to inform me, whether it
 ‘ is so or not. I have since considered
 ‘ all that you said to me Yesterday, and
 ‘ both from Reason and Matter of Fact,
 ‘ still am of Opinion, that there can be
 ‘ no just Matter of Exception taken. I
 ‘ shall only lay down two or three Instances
 ‘ which lie uppermost in my Thoughts.
 ‘ Your Lordship very well knows, that
 ‘ *Lanfranc*, Archbishop of *Canterbury*, had
 ‘ a Brother for his Archdeacon; and that
 ‘ *Sir Thomas More’s* Father was a puisny
 ‘ Judge, when he was Lord Chancellor.
 ‘ And thus, in the Sacred History, did
 ‘ God

A Brief Account

‘ God himself appoint, that the Safety
 ‘ and Advancement of the Patriarchs
 ‘ should be procured by their younger
 ‘ Brother; and, that they, with their Fa-
 ‘ ther, should live under the Protection
 ‘ and Government of *Joseph*. I instance
 ‘ in those obvious Examples, only to let
 ‘ your Lordship see, that I have canvased
 ‘ these Matters in my own Thoughts;
 ‘ and I see no Reason, but to depend
 ‘ on your kind Intentions intimated in
 ‘ your former Letter, to

Your most affectionate Brother,

and humble Servant,

LEWIS ATTERBURY.

To the Reverend Doctor ATTERBURY,
at Highgate.

BROMLEY,
Wednesday, Apr. 1720.

Dear Brother,

‘ **Y**OUR Letter, directed to *West-*
 ‘ *minster*, found me here this Morning.
 ‘ I hope to be at *Westminster* To-morrow.
 ‘ In

of the A U T H O R.

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‘ In the mean Time you may assure your-
‘ self of any Thing that is in my Dispo-
‘ sal. At present the Gentleman you
‘ mention is well, and likely to continue
‘ so. His Distemper is the same as mine,
‘ though he has it in a worse Degree.
‘ However, he is 16 or 17 Years younger
‘ than I am, and may probably therefore
‘ outlive me. When he was in Danger
‘ of late, the first Person I thought of
‘ was you. But there are Objections a-
‘ gainst that, in Point of Decency, which,
‘ I own, stick with me; and which, af-
‘ ter I have laid them before you, you
‘ shall allow, or over-rule, as you
‘ think fit. It had been a much pro-
‘ perer Post for my Nephew, if God had
‘ pleased to spare his Life. You need
‘ not mention any Thing of this Kind to
‘ me; for you may depend upon it, you
‘ are never out of the Thoughts of

Your ever affectionate Brother,

FR. ROFFEN,

To

To the Reverend Doctor ATTERBURY.

Dear Brother,

I Hope you have considered the Matter of the Archdeaconry, and do at last see it in the same Light that I do. I protest to you, I cannot help thinking it the most unseemly indecent Thing in the World, and I am very sure, the Generality of those, whose Opinions I regard, will be of that Opinion. I was so far from apprehending that such a Station, under me, would be in the least welcome to you, that I discoursed of it, and proposed it to another Person some Time ago, and am entered very far into Engagements on that Head; and, had you not written to me, I do frankly own, that I should never have spoken a Word to you about it. Believe me, when I tell you, that this is a plain State of the Fact; and, should you at last come to be of my Opinion, I dare say, you will not, at long Run, think yourself mistaken. I am sure, I shall not be at Ease, till you are in some good Dignity in the Church; such as you, and I, and all the World shall agree,

gree, is every Way proper for you. I
am,

DEANERY,
Tuesday Night.

Dear Brother,

Yours most affectionately,

FR. ROFFEN.

To the Reverend Doctor ATTERBURY.

Dear Brother,

THE Person, to whom I told you
I had gone very far towards en-
gaging myself for the Archdeaconry,
was Dr. Brydget, the Duke of Chan-
dois's Brother; and him I am this Day
going to collate to it. I hope you are
convinced by what I have said, and
written, that nothing could have been
more improper, than the placing you
in that Post, immediately under myself:
Could I have been easy under that
Thought, you may be sure, no Man
living should have had the Preference to
you. I am,

Dear Brother,

May 20, 1720.

Yours most affectionately,

FR. ROFFEN.

To

*To the Right Reverend the Lord Bishop of
Rochester.*

Dear Brother,

I AM obliged to you for the Favour
of your last, and more particularly
for giving me a Reason for your Dispo-
sal of the Archdeaconry and Prebend an-
nexed, when you was not obliged to give
any Reason at all. I cannot yet imagine
what Indecency there can be to have
raised your elder Brother in Place under
you, which doth not bear more hard,
supposing the Person to be the Brother
of a Duke: There is some Shew of
Reason, I think, for the Non-acceptance,
but none for the Not giving it. And
since your Lordship was pleased to signi-
fy to me, that I should over-rule you
in this Matter, I confess it was some
Disappointment to me; though, since
you did not think fit to bestow it on
me, I think you have given it to one
of the most deserving Persons I know
of, who will add more to the Honour
of the Place, than I could have receiv-
ed from it. I hope I shall be con-
tent with that meaner Post in which
I am,

I am, my Time, at longest, being but short in this World, and my Health not suffering me to make those necessary Applications others do: Nor do I understand the Language of the present Times; for I find, I begin to grow an old-fashioned Gentleman, and am ignorant of the Weight and Value of Words, which in our Times rise and fall like Stock. I did not think that Dr. Brydges would have took up with an Archdeaconry, when his Brother can make him a Bishop, when he pleases: Though, had your Lordship put me in that Post, I should not have endeavoured to have over-ruled you a second Time. I am

Your affectionate Brother,

and humble Servant,

LEWIS ATTERBURY.

A Brief Account

IF the Reader looks upon the Insertion of these Letters as a Digression, I hope it is a pardonable one; and the rather so, because I shall not detain him very long in protracting this Account; having little more to inform him with relating to our Author, but that he lived with a pretty good Share of Health, till he was about Seventy, and usually preached once every *Sunday*. After this Period, the Infirmities of old Age and a Stroke (though a gentle one) of the Palsy, made him less constant in the Pulpit, and occasioned his going frequently to *Bath*, where he died, after a short Illness, on the 20th of *Oct.* † *A. D.* 1731.

IN his Will he gave some few Books to the Libraries at *Bedford* and *Newport*, and his whole Collection of Pamphlets, amounting to upwards of 200 Volumes, were by the Directions in it sent to the Library of *Christ-Church, Oxford*. He charged his Estate for ever with the Payment of 10 *l.* Yearly to a School-mistress, to instruct Girls at *Newport-Pagnel*, which Salary he had himself in his Life-time paid

† And not on *Octob.* 24, 1732, as the Gen. Dict.

paid for many Years. He remembered some of his Friends, and left a respectful Legacy of an Hundred Pounds to his *Dear Brother in Token of his true Esteem and Affection*, as the Words of the Will are. And made the Bishop's Son (after his Grand-daughter who did not long survive him) Heir to all his Fortune. He gave Directions to be buried at *Highgate*, and that a Monument should be erected in the Chapel, and *an Inscription in such or like Words* as he should leave behind him. All which was punctually complied with. A Fluted Marble Column with a Pedestal and Capital of the *Corinthian* Order, surmounted with his paternal Arms, being set up on the Wall near the Pulpit, with the following Inscription on the Pedestal:

To the Memory of

LEWIS ATTERBURY, LL. D.

Formerly Rector of *Sywell*, in the County of *Northampton*, and one of the Six Preachers to her late Sacred Majesty *Q. Anne*, at *St. James's* and *Whitehall*. He was 36 Years Preacher of this Chapel:

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24 Years Rector of *Shepperton*, in the County of *Middlesex*: And 11 Years Rector of this Parish of *Hornsey*. He married *Penelope*, the Daughter of *John Bedingfield*, Esq; by whom he had four Children, viz. two Sons who died young; *Bedingfield Atterbury*, M. A. who died soon after he had entered into Holy Orders: and *Penelope*, who was married to *George Sweetaple*, of *St. Andrew's Holborn*, Brewer, by whom he had one Daughter, *Penelope Sweetaple*, now living.

He died at *Bath*, *October* the 20th *A. D.* 1731.
In the 76th Year of his Age, and lies buried near this Place.

On another Side of the Pedestal is inscribed,

Penelope Sweetaple,
Grand-Daughter to
Dr. Lewis Atterbury,
Died June the 3. 1732.
In the eleventh Year
Of her Age.

Under-

Underneath the Base of the Column, is a Book opened, on the Leaves of which is,

Abi Spectator, & Te brevi Morituum Scito!

In English,

Go Spectator, and know that thou shalt soon die!

THERE is one Clause of his Will which must be taken Notice of, because it gives a Reason for the Publication of the following Discourses. He deviseth to the Publisher of them, whom he appointed his Executor, *all his Manuscript Sermons, and other Manuscript Books and Papers of his Writing or Composition, desiring that he do revise and select such of them, as he shall think may serve to the Honour of God, and bring no Discredit to his Memory, and that he do cause such to be printed.*

THE Publisher therefore takes this Opportunity of assuring the Public, that he hath taken all the Care he could herein to comply with the Will of the Deceased; that most of the Discourses, which are here

offered to them, were noted, by the Author *to be printed*, though they had not all his last Hand to fit them for the Press: That in the Revival he hath taken Care to do Justice both to the Author and the Reader: And, that these SERMONS were, most of them, preached at *Highbate, Whitehall, or St. James's Chapel*,

As to the Discourses themselves, they are submitted to the Judgment of the Public, who, it is to be hoped will not give them a less favourable Reception, than those Pieces met with, which he published in his younger Years: A Catalogue of which shall be subjoined to these Memoirs.

If Nature was lavish in giving his Brother, the Bishop, the most ornamental and useful Endowments of a fine Genius, a ready Wit, an eloquent Pen, and an engaging and proper Elocution: She was not wanting in bestowing on our Author good and sound natural Parts, which, even in his Youth, he much improved by severe Studies.

By

By his constant and repeated Pulpit-Exercises, for upwards of forty Years together, he acquired the Reputation of a plain, useful, and solid Preacher. The Drift of his Discourses was to make Men better Christians, and therefore, he never chose to dwell upon nice and high Speculations; and, whenever he did enter upon those more elevated Subjects, his principal Endeavour was, to render such Considerations useful towards the Amending the Lives of his Congregation. His Delivery was a-kin to the Stile of his Discourses, plain and easy, without any Manner of Affectation.

His Stile hath nothing in it of Labour, and, perhaps, may sometimes, by nicer Judges, be taxed with Want of Accuracy: But, the Truth is this, his Sense flowed easily from him, and he was happy in a plain and intelligible Way of expressing himself, and therefore was the less careful of turning and smoothing his Periods, or studying for the choicest Words to convey his Meaning; and yet, notwithstanding this, we often are surprised to find in his Discourses such
beauteous

beauteous Strokes, as, though they do not smell of the Lamp, yet the most florid Writer might justly be proud of. The great Archbishop Tillotson was his Acquaintance, and the Works of that excellent Prelate, what he admired and studied; and it is not improbable that to this was partly owing that easy, flowing Stile in which his Sermons are indited.

His Stile hath nothing in it of Labour, and perhaps may sometimes be mistaken for ease, but the Truth is this, he seems to have been born with a happy in a plain and intelligible Way of expressing himself, and therefore was the less careful of turning and twisting his Periods, of studying for the choice Words to convey his Meaning; and yet notwithstanding this we often are surprised to find in his Discourses such

A
C A T A L O G U E

Of the WORKS of
LEWIS ATTERBURY, LL. D.

I. **T**HE *Penitent Lady*; or *Reflections on the Mercy of God*. Written by the famed *Madam La Valliere*, since her Retirement from the *French Court* to a Nunnery. Translated out of *French*, by a Divine of the Church of *England*. In Twelves. 1684.

II. A Sermon, preached at the Funeral of the Lady *Compton*, August 4, 1687. Quarto. 1687.

III. Ten Sermons, preached before her Royal Highness the Princess *Anne of Denmark*, at the Chapel at *St. James's*. By *Lew.*

Lew. Atterbury, LL. D. and one of the Six Preachers to her Royal Highness. In *Octavo*. Dedicated to her Royal Highness. 1699.

IV. A Second Volume of Twelve Sermons, on, 1. *The Being of a God*. 2. *His Justice and Mercy*. 3. *Miracles*. 4. *Dreams*. 5. *The Image of God in Man*. 6. *The real Presence in the Sacrament*. 7. *The Resurrection*. 8. *Superstition*. 9 and 10. *Reason and Religion*. 11. *Thanksgiving*. 12. *Submission to the Will of God*. Preached at St. James's and Whitehall, by *Lewis Atterbury*, LL. D. and one of the Six preaching Chaplains there to Her Majesty. Dedicated to the Queen. In *Octavo*. 1703.

V. Some Letters relating to the *History of the Council of Trent*.

VI. A Sermon, preached at *Whitehall*, *August 23*, 1705. Being the Day appointed for a publick Thanksgiving for the late glorious Success of Her Majesty's Arms, and those of her Allies, under the Command of *John*, Duke of *Marlborough*. By *Lewis Atterbury*, LL. D. In *Quarto*. 1705.

VII. AN

VII. An Answer to a Popish Book, intituled, *A True and Modest Account of the chief Points in Controversy between the Roman Catholics and the Protestants*, together with some Considerations upon the Sermons of a Divine of the Church of *England* (viz. Dr. Tillotson) by N. Colson. Wherein, the Objections, which N. C. has brought against the Arguments which his Grace, the late Archbishop of *Canterbury*, made Use of in his Sermons against Popery, are considered, and answered on these following Heads: 1. The Church of *Rome* not Catholic. 2. The Supremacy. 3. The Infallibility of the Church. 4. Transubstantiation. 5. The Communion in one Kind. 6. Prayers in an unknown Tongue. 7. The Invocation of Saints. 8. Images. 9. Purgatory. 10. Indulgencies. In *Octavo*. 1706.

VIII. *The Re-union of Christians: Or, the Means to re-unite all Christians in one Confession of Faith.* (Translated from the *French*) with an Appendix, in which some Account is given both of the Author and the Book. In *Octavo*. 1708.

IX. THE

IX. *The Perfect and Upright Man's Character and Encouragement*: In a Sermon occasioned by the Death of the Lady Gould, and preached at the Chapel in Highgate, Mar. 22, 1712-13. In Quarto. 1713.

X. A Sermon preached at Whitehall, on Thursday June 7. 1716, being the Day of Public Thanksgiving to Almighty God, for suppressing the late unnatural Rebellion: And at the Chapel at Highgate, June 10. By Lewis Atterbury, LL.D. and Chaplain to his Majesty at Whitehall. 1716.

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*The Lot is cast into the Lap: but the whole
Disposing thereof is of the Lord.*

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JAMES i. 17.

*With whom is no Variableness, nei-
ther Shadow of turning.*

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Of the wonderful Workmanship of God
in the Frame of Man's Body.

PSALM cxxxix. 14.

*I will praise thee, for I am fearfully and
wonderfully made ; marvellous are thy
Works, and that my Soul knoweth right
well.*

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Creatures.

PSALM cxix. 68.

Thou art good, and doest Good.——

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God is slow to Anger, but terrible in his
Judgments.

NAHUM i. 3.

*The Lord is slow to Anger, and great in
Power, the Lord will not at all acquit
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the Storm, and the Clouds are the Dust of
his Feet.*

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dead Body shall they arise; awake and
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I THESS. v. 19.

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GALAT. v. 22, 23.

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S E R M O N I.

The Nature and Necessity of Faith
in GOD.

J O H N xiv. 1.

Ye believe in God, believe also in me.

TH E S E Words are Part of our SERM.
Blessed Saviour's Discourse with I.
his Disciples, in which he pre-
pares them for his Departure,
tells them what should befall both him and
them, comforts them against their ap-
proaching Loss, and gives them the best
and most comfortable Cordial to revive
their drooping Spirits: *Let not your Heart
be troubled; ye believe in God, believe also
in me.*

I N my following Discourse I shall only
consider the former Part of my Text: *Ye
believe in God*; and, in order to explain this
unto you, I shall shew,

B

I. T H E

SERM.

- I. I. THE Nature of *Faith* in the General.
 II. MORE particularly the Nature of *Faith* in God.
 III. WHAT it is we must believe concerning God.
 IV. THE Necessity of believing thus ; and then,
 V. I SHALL make some Inferences from the foregoing Considerations.

I. OF the Nature of *Faith* in General.
 Now *Faith* in General is nothing else but the Assent of the Mind to some Proposition, upon the Authority of some other Person, who affirms the Truth of it to us ; for there is a three-fold Evidence by which we come to the Knowledge of Things, Sense, Reason, and Faith. The greatest Part of what we know, is taken in by the Senses ; by the Senses we converse with external Objects, and, by the Images received by these Windows of the Soul, we frame our Notions and Ideas of Things ; and we have the greatest Certainty of those Things which are approved of by the Evidence of our Senses. And therefore the Apostle, proving to his Hearers the Certainty of those Facts upon which the Christian Religion is built, tells

of Faith in God.

3

tells them, that the Things he had *seen* and *heard*, those he *declared unto them*. SERM.
I.

NEXT to the Evidence of our own Senses, is the Evidence of honest and faithful Men, especially in those Matters in which they have no Interest, nor have they any Reason why they should impose upon us. And the Assent to what such Persons tell us, in such Cases, and under such Circumstances, is what we call *Faith*; we believe what they say, because we have no Reason to doubt of it, or to call it in Question. John i. 3.

THE other Means of Knowledge is by the Exercise of our Reason, and arises from the Consideration of those single Ideas taken in by the Sense; and framing general Notions from them; and this is most subject to Error and Mistake, both from the Blindness of our discerning Faculty, the Obscurity of the Object, which generally turns its dark Side towards us, and our Unskilfulness in applying them. From a due Consideration of the Difference between these three, Sense, Faith, and Reason, we shall the more clearly and easily discover the Nature of Faith. This being premised in the General, we shall the better understand,

II. THE Nature of *Faith* in God in Particular; which may be taken, either for the Assent of the Mind, to this Truth,

B 2

that

SERM. that there is a God ; or else for the Doctrine

I. to be believed concerning the Godhead :

I shall take it in this last Sense, both because it is most extensive and comprehends the other, for he that believes the Doctrine which is laid down in the Holy Scriptures, concerning the Godhead, must needs believe and confess that there is a God, the one being implied in the other. Now a due *Faith* in *God* implies these three Things :

I. A COMPETENT Knowledge of the Articles of our Faith, and a Looking into the Reasons why we believe them. For a blind Assent to we know not what, nor why, may be called *Credulity*, but not *Faith*, and by Consequence is not a Duty, but a Sin ; true Faith is built upon reasonable Motives, and therefore Faith and Knowledge are frequently put one for the other, in the Holy Scripture. For, when the *Samaritans* would express the Certainty of their Faith, and the Strength

John iv. 42. of it, they said, they *knew that this is indeed the Christ, the Saviour of the World* ; and St. *Paul* describes the true Believers by

1 Tim. iv. 3. this Character, that they *believe and know the Truth* ; for all Infidelity is founded in Ignorance, it is impossible that we should consider the fundamental Truths of the Christian

Christian Religion, and the Reasons upon which they are bottomed, and not assent unto them; nay, they are so bright and glorious, that many of them would be seen by their own Light, did not Men wilfully shut their Eyes, or suffer themselves to be blinded by their own corrupt Affections; so that, to the gaining of a true Faith in God, our first Business must be, to understand what Discoveries God has made of his Nature and Being; both by the Light of Nature, the Deductions of Reason, and the Testimony of the Holy Scripture, and, when we have found them out, then

2. To give our firm and sincere Assent unto them; to rivet and fix the Persuasion of God's Being, and the Notion of his Attributes, so firmly in our Minds, that no Power shall be able to move them, and that we may never admit any Doubt or Scruple of this fundamental Article of our Faith, or be such Fools, as to say in our Hearts, *There is no God.*

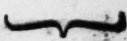
3. But that which perfects the Act of Believing is a suitable Practice of Repentance and Obedience; so to believe that there is a God, as to believe his Word, and yield Obedience to his Laws; and where our Obedience is defective, and we

SERM. have offended God, to divert his Anger by

I. a sincere Repentance. Without doing thus, our Belief in God cannot be called *Faith*; for Infidelity, of some Sort or other, is at the Bottom of every Sin; and, in every wilful Transgression of the Law of God, either Assent or Persuasion are wanting, or else they are very weak and imperfect, or, however, not actually exercised at that Instant in which we do amiss. For, when Men are once duly informed of the Truth, they must needs assent to it; and, when they sincerely assent to it, it will bend their Wills, and derive an effectual Influence upon their Powers of Acting. To believe, therefore, in God, in its utmost Latitude, imports to understand what the Holy Scriptures have revealed concerning him, firmly to assent to what we understand, and to act according to this Belief: Which leads me to shew,

III. WHAT it is we must believe concerning God; or, what those Propositions are which we are obliged to assent to, concerning this Divine Being. And,

I. WE must believe that there is such a Being as a God (*i. e.*) the first Cause and Beginning of all Things, who contains all those Perfections in himself, which he is pleased to bestow upon created Beings.

Beings. And this may be clearly proved SERM.
from the Works of God, *i. e.* those Ef- I.
fects which we see produced in the World, 
which can proceed from no other Cause,
but an infinite Mind, who contains all
Manner of Perfection in himself, and de-
rives the Rays of his Goodness upon all
inferior Creatures. There is no Person
who considers the wonderful Order and
Beauty of the World; the Subserviency
there is in every Part to produce the
Good of the Whole; and that in these
numerous Parts there is nothing monstrous,
nothing either wanting or abounding; but
he must needs conclude, that it is the ad-
mirable Contrivance of some infinitely
wise Mind, some Being whose Skill infi-
nitely transcends our weak Capacities;
nay, there is no Part of the Creation so
mean as to be imitated by the Art and
Wit of Man; we cannot make so much
as one of the Hairs of our Head, or
form one of the Nails of our Fingers.
And whereas, by the Help of Glasses, we
may observe Unevenness and Irregularity
in the Point of the finest and sharpest
Needle, yet every Thorn in the Hedge is
formed without any of these Bunglings;
which plainly proves how short Art falls
in its Imitation of Nature, and that the

SERM. Works of God transcend the Works of

I. Men, as far as his Thoughts do our Thoughts. And, what is still more admirable, Man cannot perform the ordinary Actions of irrational Beings, or of the meanest Insect ; all the Wit and Art in the World cannot build that Nest which every poor Bird makes, or set it in Order, when once it is pulled in Pieces. I would fain see the wisest or wittiest *Atheist* in the World, even such an one as shall pretend to make the World better and more uniform than it is ; I say, I would fain see him but weave such a Web as every Spider makes without Thinking or Foresight, which, if he cannot perform, it is plain, that these irrational Creatures are directed by a superior Hand and Mind, who, having made this World, orders and governs it with infinite Wisdom and Conduct ; and, in short, that there is such a Being as a God.

2. WE must believe that there is and can be but *one* God, for tho' the Scripture teaches us, that there are *Lords many*, and *Gods many*, yet this must be understood in a limited Sense ; as is plain by this one Argument, that, since our natural Notion of a God is this, that he is a Being who contains in himself all possible Perfection, there

there can be but one who is infinitely perfect; for, if all Perfection is comprehended in one Being, there can be no Perfection but what is derived from him, what came from him as its Source and flows to him again. But yet, we must not so conceive God to be one, as to exclude the Trinity of Persons, which, though not discoverable by the Light of Nature, is plainly taught us in the Holy Scripture, and absolutely necessary to be believed, in order to the understanding the Oeconomy of Man's Salvation, and the wonderful Work of our Redemption by a Saviour. It is evident, that it doth not imply any Contradiction, that one may be Three, and Three One, in different Respects. And therefore, since the Holy Scripture has told us, that the Divine Nature is so, it is highly reasonable, that we should acquiesce in those Discoveries which God has been pleased to make of himself to us, without prying too curiously into those Things which are concealed from us. For, since we understand so little of our own Natures, how can we imagine that we should be able to comprehend an infinite Being, in our finite Understandings. Nay, it is so agreeable to Reason, that the Nature of God should be incomprehensible, that

no

SERM. no wise Man would own such a God, as

I. could be comprehended. It would be a
 { much more useful Enquiry to consider,
 what those particular Excellencies of the
 Divine Nature are, which God has discovered to us in the Holy Scriptures.

1. If we search them, we shall find that he who believes in God, must believe, *First*, that he is a *Spirit*, which, though it is the best and highest Name that we can describe God by, yet it is such as is infinitely unworthy his most excellent Being; and therefore when we say, God is a Spirit, we do not mean, that he is such a Being as Angels and the Souls of Men are; but only that, being of a spiritual Nature, he transcends the Excellency of Angelic Natures and created Spirits, much more than they do the corporeal World. When, therefore, we say, that God is a *Spirit*, we mean these three Things (1.) That God is a Being who has no Extension of Parts, no corporeal Bulk, no bodily Members. (2.) That he is an intellectual Being, such a Being as is endowed with infinite Power, Wisdom, and Activity. And (3.) That he is such a Being as far excels all those other spiritual Beings we are acquainted with, and that there is a much greater Distance between the spiritual

ritual Nature of God, and that of the SERM.
highest and most glorious Archangel and I.
Seraphim, than there is between these An-
gels, and the poorest Worm that crawls
upon the Earth; this is the best Notion
we can frame of God as a Spirit, though
such as is infinitely unworthy the Di-
vine Nature, and can only be allowed of
for this Reason, because we can frame no
better Notion of him.

2. THE Holy Scriptures will also in-
form us, *Secondly*, that God is *eternal*, i. e.
a Being that never had any Beginning, nor
will ever have any End; Time is only the
Property of created Beings, and is only a re-
lative Term which respects the Existence of
some other Being coeval with it: But God
is from Everlasting to Everlasting, his *Throne* Lam. v.
is *from Generation to Generation*; and at ^{19.}
his *right Hand are Pleasures for evermore.* Pf. xvi. 11.

3. *Thirdly*, WE must believe also that
God is *immutable*, i. e. He is not subject
to Change, either in respect of his Es-
sence, his Knowledge, Duration, Place, or
the Determination of his Will; in him
there is *no Variableness, neither Shadow of* Jam. i. 17.
Turning. He can neither change for the
better, because he is the best of all; nor
for the worse, for then he would cease to
be the most perfect Being; and, therefore,
must

SERM. must always remain in the same State and

I. Condition he is in ; he is *the Lord and changes not*, as he describes himself ; and therefore *Balaam* argued truly concerning God, *God is not a Man, that he should lie, neither the Son of Man, that he should repent : Hath he said, and shall he not do it ? Or hath he spoken, and shall he not make it good ?* And, therefore, when God is said in the Holy Scripture to repent either of some good Promise, some Evil threatened, or of some Work he has wrought, he then speaks, not of any real Change wrought in himself, but only after the Manner of Men, and in Condescension to our mean and low Capacities, accommodating his Speech to our Weakness and Frailty, and discovering his Mind to us after the same Manner one Man doth to another. For God is now what he ever was, and ever will be, the same implacable Enemy to Sin, and Terror to all incorrigible Sinners ; the same merciful Father to such as return to him by Repentance ; the same faithful Friend to Virtue and good Men ; the same Protector of all such as trust and rely upon him, and the same Rewarder of all such as obey his Laws, and walk after his Commandments to do them.

Mal. iii.
6.
Numb.
xxiii. 19.

4thly.

4thly, HE that believes in God, must SERM.
believe him to be *omnipotent*, i. e. That I.
he is able to do all Things which do
not imply Weakness, or a Contradiction
either in the Things themselves, or in the
Doer of them. That, as all Power is de-
rived from him, so all Power must sub-
mit to him, and obey the Word of his
Power and Might ; so that we may well
say, that *Power alone belongs unto God*,
i. e. the supreme and commanding Power ;
and that he is *able to do exceedingly above*
all that we can ask or think.

5thly, HE that believes in God, must be-
lieve him to be *omnipresent*, not only with
respect to his Power and Influence, but
his Presence also ; he rules and governs all
Things by his Power and Providence, is
present in all Places, but delights to dwell
in a more peculiar Manner in the *humble*
and *contrite Heart*, in Holy and Religious
Assemblies, in the Place which he has
chosen to put his Name there. His Es-
sence is in every Place, and commensurate
with all Beings ; or rather, to express our-
selves more properly, Place itself is in God,
and all other Things exist as from him,
and by him, so in him also.

6thly, HE that believes in God, must
believe him to be *omniscient* ; that his
Know-

SERM. Knowledge extends to all Times and all

I. Things, that there is not *any Creature that*
Heb. iv.
13. *is not manifest in his Sight, but all Things*
are naked and opened unto the Eyes of him
with whom we have to do ; he knows every
 particular Action and Thought of the Heart,
 and can tell Man even those Thoughts
 which he has forgot, or foretel those
 which are not yet conceived in his Mind.

7thly, To believe in God is to believe
 him to be *wise, i. e.* That he proposes
 the most excellent Ends, and effects them
 by the most proper and becoming Means ;
 and, though there are different Degrees
 of Wisdom in the Creatures, yet the wi-
 sest of them all are in some Circumstan-
 ces deficient, and God is truly stiled the
only wise God, i. e. a Being who is per-
 fectly so without any Mixture of Folly and
 Imperfection.

8thly, To believe in God is to believe
 him to be *true*, both as Truth signifies Ve-
 racity in his Word, and Faithfulness to his
 Promise : The one is the Foundation of
 our Faith, the other of our Hope and
 Trust in God.

9thly, We must believe God to be the
 most *pure* and *holy* Being ; he cannot but
 hate Sin, and love Virtue, the one being
 agreeable and conformable to his Nature,
 the other disagreeable to it. 10thly,

Fourthly, We must believe God to be perfectly *just* and *equal*, in giving to every one the due Desert of their Deeds, and distributing Rewards and Punishments according to their Deserts; for, either in this World or the next, the Judge of all the Earth will do right, and we shall find, that the Ways of God are just and equal, though at present past finding out.

SERM.
I.

Lastly, We must believe God to be infinitely *good*, both in a metaphysical Sense, as Goodness is the Complement of all other Perfections; and as it signifies Love, Kindness, and Beneficence to all his Creatures, being the indulgent Parent of his numerous Off-spring, ready to give them all the good Things their Natures are capable of receiving, and to forgive them all their Sins, if they return to him, by a sincere and unfeigned Repentance.

THESE are the chief of those Divine Perfections, which God has been pleased to reveal to us; and though there may be many more hidden Excellencies, which we are unacquainted withal (as an honourable Author observes) yet, since God has not been pleased to discover them to us, he will not require that we should search too curiously into them, or pry into what he is pleased to hide from us. That which
best

SERM. best becomes us is, to meditate on those

I. which are plainly laid down in the Holy Scripture, to transcribe them by Imitation, and not so to think on one as to exclude the rest; but to consider them in Conjunction with one another, and then, as they will shine with a brighter Lustre, so they will be more clearly and plainly comprehended by us: Which brings me to consider,

IV. *Fourthly*, THE Necessity of conceiving God after this Manner, in order to the begetting in our Minds a serious and hearty Belief of him; and that upon these two Accounts, 1. Because we are very apt to frame false Notions of God. 2. Because the Framing wrong Notions of God is of most dangerous and pernicious Consequence.

1. *First*, WE are very apt to frame false Notions of God. Most of the dangerous Errors in Religion have proceeded from this Original, the fancying God to be such an one as ourselves, cloathing him with the Passions and Affections we poor Mortals are subject to; and when we have thus canonised the Diseases of our Souls (as the antient *Romans* did those of their Bodies) it is no Wonder if we pay Adoration to them. It is a very difficult Matter to think of God aright, for
either

either our Understandings, are blinded by the Clouds of our Passions, or led aside by some By-interest or prevailing Affection; and hence proceed most of these extravagant Conceipts, concerning the Deity, entertained by the Generality. Some Men are of a morose and surly Temper, a malicious and envious Disposition, and these Men fancy God as implacable as themselves; they think he takes Delight in that which he calls his *strange Work*, and that he willingly grieves the Children of Men; that he watches every Opportunity of exerting his Vengeance, and that his Justice requires that he should never remember Mercy. Others, who are of a mild and soft Disposition, fancy to themselves a gentle and easy Deity, who will forgive Sin without Satisfaction, and pardon it without Repentance; though these are the Conditions which the Holy Scripture has indispensably required of us. And these false Conceptions of God do not rest in the Intellect, but

2. Secondly, THEY produce most dangerous and pernicious Effects on Men's Practice: For, as it is a Rule in Physic, that an Error in the first Concoction is hardly ever rectified in the Second; so in Divinity an Error, in a necessary and fundamental

SERM. I. **damental Truth, has always a fatal Influence upon Practice. Now the Framing false Notions of God in our Minds generally produces these ill Effects; either first, Prophaneness, or secondly, Superstition, or thirdly, Enthusiasm.**

First, If Men have imbibed false Notions of God's Omnipotence and Omniscience, they will easily be induced to think that either God cannot, or will not concern himself with the Affairs of this sub-lunary World; that they are either too many, or too trifling to employ his Care, and lie under his Inspection; but that it is more agreeable to that Notion they have of him, that, having made the World and set it in Order, he should give himself up to eternal Rest, and commit the Guidance of it to Chance and Fortune, and, being pleased with the Enjoyment of himself, remain an unconcerned Spectator of what we poor Mortals do; and then the Influence will be plain, that, if God doth not govern the World, Men are not accountable for their Actions, nor will ever undergo a Judgment for them. Such dangerous Mistakes proceed from comparing the Knowledge and Power of God with our own, and concluding preposterously, that, because we cannot be present in all Places,

Places, or attend to many Things at the SERM.
 same Time, therefore the Eyes of God are I.
 bounded and limited that he cannot see,
 and his Hands shortened that he cannot
 save.

FROM the same Source, *Secondly*, proceeds Superstition; for, when Men consider and remark, that the greatest Persons are pleased with little Formalities and low Condescensions, that they yield a ready Ear to Commendations and Flatteries, and love to be courted and caressed, they fancy God to be such an one as themselves, that they may appease him, when angry, with outward Appearances and low Submissions; and that he loves the Pageantry and Shew of a formal Worshipper; whereas nothing will please God but a Heart full fraught with Love and Gratitude, and a Will submissive and ready to obey his Commands; and from this Source most of the superstitious Rites of the Heathen did flow and derived their Original.

AND, *Thirdly*, when Men shall imagine God to be an austere, morose, and cruel Being, who takes Delight in the Misery of his poor Creatures, and has created the Generality of Mankind on Purpose to make them miserable, and has only elected some Few to be the chosen People of
 C 2 God;

SERM. God, on whom he will confer Salvation

I. without any previous Dispositions or Qualifications of their own, such Notions of God as those must necessarily affect them with the most dangerous Enthusiasm; they will soon come to believe themselves the Elect and Chosen of God, the Darlings and Favourites of Heaven; that all their Actions are carried on by a Divine Impulse, and their Minds are full of the Deity; and then there will be no Fancy or Imagination so extravagant which comes into their Head, which they will not ascribe to God, and take the most absurd Imaginations, the most ridiculous Concepts, for Inspiration. Such mischievous Effects as these do proceed from the maintaining false Notions of God in our Minds; and to such Causes as these Prophaneness, Superstition, and Enthusiasm owe their Birth and Increase. Whereas that Man, who takes Care to form a due Notion of God in his Mind, will soon experience the excellent Effects which it will produce. Such a Man's Religion will be solid and stable, made up of the most social and cardinal Virtues; his Devotions will be affectionate and rational withal, such as the Nature of God requires, and the Reason of Divine Worship points out to him; his Will will

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Script

be submissive, his Obedience uniform, and SERM.
his Love both to God and Men extensive I.
and universal,

AND now having made out this Truth,
that there is a Necessity of forming a ra-
tional Belief of God in our Minds, such a
Belief as lets us into the Knowledge of his
Being and Attributes ; there only remains
in the

Vth and Last Place, THAT we make
some few Conclusions from what has been
said ; and,

1. FROM hence we may infer the Ne-
cessity of a rational Faith, such a Faith as
is taken up upon good Grounds and solid
Reasons ; for an ignorant credulous Faith,
taken up only on the Hearsay of others, an
implicit Faith, such as the Church of *Rome*
enjoins, can be of no Use to us, because it
will make us neither wiser nor better ; but
a true justifying Faith is a Faith according
to Knowledge, a Faith which enlightens
our Minds with the Knowledge of the
Truth, and influences our Obedience.

2. FROM hence we may infer, that
those Notions concerning God are most ne-
cessary to be inculcated, which have the
most immediate Influence upon our Prac-
tice. For, since we find God, in the Holy
Scripture, not described after such a Man-
ner.

SERM. ner as to fill the Head with airy Notions,

I. but rather proposed so as to be a Pattern
 for our Actions, we may be assured that
 such Notions as these are most useful to be
 meditated on by us. That which the Holy
 Writings chiefly aim at, is to fix on our
 Minds due Notions of God's Purity, Holiness,
 Goodness, Truth, Justice, and Mercy,
 to this End that we may transcribe and imitate
 these Perfections; that we may be pure
 as God is pure, holy as he is holy, good as
 he is good, at least in Kind, tho' not in the
 same Degree, and that we may do Justice,
 and love Mercy, and walk humbly with
 our God: Which God of his Mercy grant,
 for *Jesus Christ* his Sake.

SERMON

S E R M O N II.

GOD the Rewarder of all who seek Him.

H E B. xi. 6.

But without Faith it is impossible to please him : For he that cometh to God, must believe that he is, and that he is a Rewarder of them that diligently seek him.

IN the Beginning of this Chapter the SERM.
 Apostle lays down a Description of II.
 Faith, *Now Faith is the Substance of*
Things hoped for, the Evidence of
Things not seen, i. e. It is a confident Dependence upon God for the Performance of his Promises, a Conviction and full Persuasion of the Truth of those Things, of which we have no ocular and sensible Demonstration. And that the *Jews* (whose Rites and Worship did chiefly consist of such Things as were obvious to the Sense) might

SERM. might not look upon this Faith as a new

II. and strange Thing, in the following Verses he instances in the Examples of pious Men, who, even under the Law, were eminent for the highest Acts of Faith, such as were *Abel* and *Enoch*; to both which God gave a signal Attestation, how pleasing their Faith was to him. As to *Abel*, the Opinion of the antient Fathers was, that God sent Fire from Heaven and consumed his Sacrifice, whereby he evidently declared, that it was pleasing in his Sight, and offered up according to his Will; whereas the Sacrifice of *Cain* remained unburnt, either, as some think, because he only offered up the Fruits of the Earth, whereas he ought to have offered up the best that he had; or, because his Offering was not attended with suitable Affections. This, I say, was the Opinion of the Antients. However, it is plain, that God gave some evident and ocular Demonstration, how well he was pleased with *Abel's* Sacrifice; for, the Text says, *God testified of his Gifts.*

Heb. xi.
4.

As to *Enoch*, it is certain, that by Faith he did that which was acceptable in the Sight of God, because he was rewarded in a most extraordinary Manner, by being *translated* immediately into Heaven:

Heaven : And therefore it is presently added in the Words of the Text, *But without Faith it is impossible to please him ; for he that cometh to God, must believe that he is, and that he is a Rewarder of them that diligently seek him, i. e.* That Man who would imitate those two great Examples, and please God as *Abel* and *Enoch* did, he must have a true, firm, and lively Faith, which Faith must appear, by giving his Assent to those two fundamental Articles of the Creed, that there is a God, and that this God will call him to an Account for his Actions done in this Life, and either reward or punish him according to his Deeds : For he that is not fully convinced, that there is a God, can have no Religion at all, because Religion is the Acknowledgement and Worship of a God : And he, that doth not believe future Rewards and Punishments, will want sufficient Motives to worship this God. For, since all human Actions are moved by those two Springs, *Hope* and *Fear*, no Man would do an Action which runs contrary to the Bias of his corrupt Appetites, who doth not expect some Recompence for so doing ; neither will he deny himself in any grateful Lust or pleasing Sin, who is not afraid that Punishment

SERM. ment will follow the Committing of it.

II. Whereas, on the Contrary, he that believes there is an infinitely good and powerful Being, who looks down from Heaven and beholds and takes Notice of all his Words and Actions, and even the most secret Thoughts of his Heart; who records them all in his Book, and will call him to an Account for them, and either graciously reward, or severely punish them, in a Life which shall begin after this short Life is ended, and continue to all Eternity: Such a Man will be wonderfully careful how he behaves himself, he will set a strict Watch over the first Motions of his Soul, he will avoid every Thing which he thinks will displease God; he will endeavour to approach or come unto God, by imitating his Perfections, by leading a holy, just, and devout Life, and by doing whatsoever is well pleasing in his Sight. Whereas without Faith, or Belief of these fundamental Doctrines, it is impossible to please God: *For he that cometh to God, must believe that he is, and that he is a Rewarder of them that diligently seek him.*

THE former Part of this Verse contains a different Subject from the latter, namely, the Being of a God, and what Manner of Conceptions we have, or ought to

to have of him. But, as I have already **SERM.**
 anticipated this, by discoursing on that **II.**
 Head, and by shewing the Nature and
 Necessity of *Faith* in God; I shall now
 apply myself wholly to the Consideration
 of that other Proposition contained in my
 Text, *He that cometh to God, must believe,*
that he is a Rewarder of them that dili-
gently seek him. From which Words I
 shall endeavour to shew,

- I. **WHAT** is meant by *Seeking God.*
- II **WHAT** is implied in those Words of
God's being the Rewarder of them that
diligently seek him. And,
- III. **THAT** all this is necessarily to be
 believed by all such as would come un-
 to God. *He that cometh unto God, must*
believe that he is, and that he is a Re-
warder of them that diligently seek him.

I. **WHAT** is meant by *Seeking God.*
 These two Phrases, of *Seeking God* and *Com-*
ing to God, are of the same Import and
 Signification, and in Scripture Language
 denote to us the solemn Acknowledge-
 ment of God with our Mouths, by wor-
 shipping him with Prayer and Thankf-
 giving; and the Owning him in our Lives,
 by living in Obedience to his Laws: So
 that

SERM. that, by *Seeking God*, is meant, the main

II. and principal Duties of a Christian Life.

God is pleased to express himself after the Manner of Men, who use to delight in the Company, and take all Opportunities of conversing with such, they like and bear good Will unto; thus, when Men truly love God, they will take all Opportunities of frequenting the public Worship of God, and say with the *Psalmist*, that a *Day spent in his Courts is better than a Thousand elsewhere*. They will be very careful of living up to those Laws he has enjoined them, and fearful of offending him; this is that *Seeking of God* mentioned in the Text; and God is and will be a *Rewarder* of such who thus *diligently seek him*: Which brings me to enquire,

II. WHAT is implied in these Words of *God's being a Rewarder*, which denote to us these three Things.

I. THAT God will reward them in this Life. God has so ordered the Affairs of this World, that the Exercise of Virtue and Religion is the most proper and natural Means to make Men happy in this Life. This may be gathered from the Words of the Text, the Proposition is laid down in the present Tense, *God is a Rewarder*; he not only rewards good Men

Men in another Life, but in some Measure SR R M.
rewards them in this, and in keeping his II.
Commandments there is great Reward; Vir-

tue, for the most Part, is a sufficient Re-
compence to itself, and makes Men hap-
py here as well as hereafter. Thus it is
for the most Part, yet sometimes it so
falls out, that God sees fit, for many wise
Ends, to send Affliction upon good and
virtuous Men; and then the Reward of
their Goodness and Virtue is deferred till
the Life to come, when he will make
them full and ample Amends for all those
light and momentary Afflictions they have
endured in this Life. And then,

2. *Secondly*, IN this Sense God is a Re-
warder of such as diligently seek him, i. e.
He will certainly reward them one Time
or another. But,

3. *Thirdly*, IF God is the Judge of all
the Earth, who will certainly reward all
such as obey his Laws, then from the same
Reason we may infer, that he will severely
punish such as disobey them; for the same
original Justice, which engages him to re-
ward the Obedient, will also oblige him to
punish the obstinate Offender; and the
same rational Principles, which lead us to
the Belief of the one, will also equally serve
to convince us of the other; as I shall en-
deavour

SERMON. deavour to make Proof of more at large by
II. and by.

1. GOD has so ordered the Affairs of this World, that there is a Reward naturally attends good and virtuous Actions, and in that Sense he is the *Rewarder of such as diligently seek him*; it is plain, and has been made out beyond all Contradiction, that all the particular Laws of the Gospel are such as tend to promote the Welfare of Mankind in general in this Life, and the Happiness of every particular Person; and the Reason, why so many Men lead such miserable and comfortless Lives, is, for Want of the Practice of those Rules and Precepts recommended to us by our Holy Religion, and not out of any Defect in these Rules. For, were Men so temperate, sober, chaste, merciful, just, as the Christian Religion requires them to be; did they but observe those excellent Precepts and Divine Rules of holy Living, to do by others as they would have others do by them; to abstain from all Appearance of Evil, to forgive Injuries, to love their Enemies, to bless them that curse them, to do Good to them that despitefully use them and persecute them, to do Good to all Men to the utmost of their Power, to make it the Business

ness of their Lives, to be as beneficial **SERM.**
and useful to those amongst whom they **II.**

live, as possibly they can be ; to rest satisfied and contented with their Condition in the World, and quietly and chearfully enjoy those good Things God has blessed them with : Good God ! What a happy Age should we live in ? What a small Number would there be of the Miserable and Unfortunate ? How comfortable might Men live, if they would live innocently ; and at last go down to their Graves in Peace, and in the joyful Hope of a blessed Resurrection ! For our good God and bountiful Benefactor has furnished this World, like a plentiful Store-house, with all the good Things our Natures are capable of enjoying ; he has given us Objects proportionable to all our Senses and Appetites, and permitted, nay, commanded us, to taste of them and enjoy them. He created us on Purpose to do us Good, and to communicate Happiness unto us ; and is never better pleased than when Men live so as to answer this great End, to lead such comfortable Lives here, as not to exclude them from Happiness hereafter ; so that the chief Cause of most of those Calamities, which afflict Mankind, must be the Perverseness of Men's Wills, the Want
of

SERM. of that due Government and Management
 II. of themselves which right Reason dictates
 to them.

Do not the greatest Part of those Diseases which afflict our Bodies proceed from Intemperance, either in ourselves, or Ancestors, or from extravagant Affections, or the disorderly Management of ourselves, either by too much Care and Pains in the Acquisition of worldly Wealth, or too much Indulging ourselves in Sloth and Laziness, and Neglect of our lawful Callings? Do not most of our Differences and Animosities proceed either from our Passion or Peevishness, or Pride, and an overweening Concept of our own Worthiness and Abilities, and a Contempt and mean Opinion of other Men? What is the Cause of those Blemishes which befall us in our Reputation, but the Allowing ourselves too much sinful Liberty, or at least the Neglect of observing that Divine Command of *abstaining from all Appearance of Evil*? How comes it that we take so little Comfort in all those good Things God has given us, but from a covetous and too sollicitous Care for the Things of this World? And, on the other Hand, whence comes Poverty, Contempt, and all the Miseries which attend on it, but from the

the Want of Frugality and good Husbandry; from the genteel and expensive Vices of Gaming and Lasciviousness; from Pride or Luxury; or else from those more vulgar Crimes of Sloth and Laziness, which, as the *Wise Man* tells us, will *cover a Man with Rags, and bring him to a Morfel of Bread?* In short, do but consider whence proceed most of those Miseries which Mankind groan under, and are the Subjects of our daily Complaints; and you will find some Sin or other, some untamed Passion or disorderly Affection, to be the Source and Original of them. It is from hence that there is so much Mourning in our Streets, that our Prisons and Hospitals are so full, and that there is not only Contention and Division in private Families, but such Slaughters and Devastation, such unnatural Feuds and Animosities, between neighbouring People and Nations, and that Mankind takes so much Delight in torturing and destroying one another.

Now, could we but be persuaded, to become reasonable Creatures; that is, to live up to the Dignity of our Natures, to walk by that Light which God has placed within us, and to live by those Principles he has furnished us withal, we should

D

soon

SERM. soon find a new Face upon Things, *Mercy*
 II. *and Truth would rejoyce together, Righteous-*
 { *ness and Peace would kiss each other* ; the
 World would be soon reduced into one great
 Family, and one Part of it supply what is
 wanting in another ; neighbouring Nations
 would assist and support one another,
 strengthen and encourage one another in all
 good Arts and useful Inventions ; Trade and
 Commerce would flourish ; Men would
 forget and unlearn the Arts of War, they
 would turn their *Swords into Plow-shares*,
 and their *Spears into Pruning-hooks* ; the
 whole World would put on an unusual
 Gayety, and Nature wear an universal Smile.
 These would be the blessed Effects of Men's
 Living according to the Rules of Virtue and
 Religion ; and we should soon find by Ex-
 perience, that *Godliness has the Promises*
of the Life that now is, and of that Life
which is to come.

BUT yet it must be acknowledged,
 that, were the World never so good and
 virtuous, yet sometimes it would so fall
 out, that Affliction and Trouble would
 be the Lot of the Righteous ; Mankind
 is naturally subject to some Calami-
 ties, and even Paradise itself, a State of
 the purest Innocence and Integrity, was
 liable to them. No Man doubts, but
 that

that he then might have lost a Limb, SERM.
or have been bruised by the Fall of a II.
Tree, or have been destroyed by a wild
Beast ; and, since the Fall, he lies ex-
posed to many other Calamities, and there-
fore it concerns us to shew,

2. **THAT** if we have not our Reward
in this Life, yet God will reward us here-
after. One Time or other, *he is the Re-
warder of such as diligently seek him.* But
because this is not so generally acknow-
ledged, and the Rewards of another Life
do not make so deep an Impression up-
on our Minds as they ought to do, by
Reason of the great Distance there is be-
tween them and us : I shall prove this
Proposition from rational Principles, and
shew that, both from the Consideration
of our own Frame, and the Contempla-
tion of those essential Attributes which
constitute the Divine Nature, God will
certainly recompense the Sufferings of good
Men in another Life ; and that there will
come a Time when all Tears shall be wiped
away from their Eyes, and the Righteous
shall receive the promised Reward. For,

(1.) **LET** us consider the Nature and
Condition of our own Souls, which are
Beings wholly abstracted from Matter,
and perform within themselves such noble

SERM. Operations as plainly shew they were designed for some higher Employment, and
 II. longer Duration, than what this Life affords. For, were the Preservation of our Beings, and the Gratifications of our Senses and Appetites, the only End why our Souls were created, what Need had there been of abstracted Notions, or a Power to reflect? Why was the Will created free to determine its own Motions, when Imagination and Instinct would have served as well for all those Purposes; we might have performed all those Actions, and yet have continued in the same Class with the Beasts that perish. Nay, our Reason would have been so far from raising us above them, that it would only have served to have made us more miserable, since our Reflection upon past Misery, and our Fears of those which we apprehend will fall upon us, would render our Lives uncomfortable: Let us consider,

(2.) THE Testimony of our own Consciences either justifying or condemning us, according as our Actions have been either good or evil; which doth not proceed from the Fear of Punishments in this Life; for a Man's Conscience accuses him, though he acts his Wickedness never so secretly; and the greatest
 Kings

Kings and Potentates are as much sub-
 ject to the Lashes of a guilty Conscience,
 as the Wretch that plies at the Oar ;
 which is an evident Proof, that it pro-
 ceeds from the Sense Man has of an
 After-reckoning, and the Foreboding of
 future Punishments, which, though they
 do not fall upon him in this Life, yet,
 his Conscience tells him, will fall heavy
 upon him hereafter.

SERM.
 II.

(3.) ADD to this, that Justice is one of
 God's essential Attributes, and the Argu-
 ment will be still more strong ; for, since
 all Things in this World seem to be go-
 verned by Chance and Fortune ; since it
 often happens to the *Just after the Lot of*
the Wicked, and to the Wicked according
to the Work of the Righteous ; So that
 there is no knowing *Love or Hatred by*
all that is before us ; all Things come alike to
all, there is one Event to the Righteous,
and to the Wicked ; to the Clean, and to the
Unclean ; to him that sacrificeth, and to him
that sacrificeth not ; as is the Good, so is the
Sinner ; and he that sweareth, as he that
feareth an Oath ; We may observe it fre-
 quently happens, that the most innocent
 and virtuous Persons are exposed to the
 greatest Crosses and Calamities in this
 Life, that their Virtue and Holiness is so

Eccl. viii.

Ch. ix. 1,

SERM. far from shielding them from Affliction,

II. that these are the very Causes why they

are persecuted; the Violence and Wickedness of Men perverting the best Things to the worst Ends and Purposes. On the other Hand, it may and doth frequently so fall out, in these Dregs of the World and under the degenerated Manners of Mankind, that wicked Men prosper by Violence and Oppression, live in much Splendor and Affluence of all outward Things, and at last go down to their Graves in seeming Peace. All which plainly points out to us, that there will come a Time when all this will be adjusted, when the just Judge of all the Earth will do every Man Right, and the Wisdom of God's Providence will be made out to the World; when the Good shall be rewarded, and the Wicked tormented: So that there is no Man who really believes a good and just God, but he must withal confess, that there will come a Time when he will judge the World in Righteousness. Add to this,

4thly and Lastly, THE ill Consequences which would follow, if there was no future Account to be given of our Actions; for,

(1.) THIS would destroy all human Societies. Were it not for the Dread of an

After-

After-reckoning, every Man would pursue SERM.
that which his Fancy renders agreeable II.
to him, without any Respect to Justice
and Honesty; there would be no such
Things as Laws to restrain the exorbi-
tant Appetites and Desires of Mankind,
or else only such Laws as would have
little Force, because only backed with tem-
poral Rewards and Punishments; Men
would obey no longer than it was for
their temporal Interest, and break the Law
as often as it stood with their own Ad-
vantage, and as they could do it privately
and with Impunity: So that the World
would soon fall into a State of Confu-
sion; there would be no such Thing as
Good and Evil, Honest and Dishonest;
and he would be safest who had the
strongest Hand, and the most over-reach-
ing Wit.

Nor (2.) WOULD it be less prejudicial to
every Man's particular Happiness; for,
since the Troubles and Calamities of Life
make up the greatest Part of it, were
there no Rewards for the Righteous, we
should lose our chiefest Stay in a Day of
Affliction. A wise Man would hardly
think it worth his While to live, to run
the Gantlope of a Life incumbered with
continual Cares, Disquietments, Pains, and
D 4 Diseases,

SERM. Diseases, Losses and Disappointments, were
 II. it not that he hopes to arrive at a State
 attended with none of those Inconveniences ; and as for those who enjoy the most happy Condition in this World, what a cutting Thought it must needs be to consider, that they must speedily leave all their Possessions and Enjoyments, their Mirth and Gallantry ; they must part with all their curiously contrived Buildings and agreeable Conversation, and when Death lays his cold Hands upon them, and closes their Eyes, they must lie down in the Bed of Oblivion, and be as if they never had been born ? This is so uncomfortable a Reflection, that is has been controverted amongst learned Men, and that with great Warmth too, whether it were not more eligible to be eternally miserable, than to cease to be at all. And hence we have Reason to conclude, that what is so much for our Interest to be, really is ; for, since God created Man so noble a Creature, as to be *little lower than the Angels*, it cannot be imagined, that in this Respect he should be in a worse Condition than the *Beasts that perish* ; for they have neither Cares nor Disappointments, they neither reflect on their Sorrows past, nor are they solicitous for the Future ; so
 that

that it can be only the Interest of those SERM.
Men, there should be no future Rewards II.
and Punishments, who are resolved to go
on in their Sins, and who prefer the vain,
fading, transitory Enjoyments of this
World before those which are eternal in
the Heavens. And therefore I proceed
to the last General proposed,

III. To shew the absolute Necessity
of believing future Rewards and Punish-
ments for all that would come to God,
and that this is one of the strongest Pil-
lars of our Faith, and a fundamental Ar-
ticle of the Christian Religion; and there-
fore, *He that comes to God, must believe
that he is, and that he is a Rewarder
of those that diligently seek him.* And that
for this plain Reason, because, if we do
not believe that *God is a Rewarder of
such as diligently seek him*, we shall want
sufficient Encouragements and Motives to
obey his Laws; for, though Virtue may
be sometimes, and is frequently (as I
have already shewn) a sufficient Reward to
itself, yet it is not so always; for, since
the Fall, the Corruption of Man's Na-
ture is so great, that Vice has got the
Upper-hand, and the Generality of Man-
kind have degenerated from the Excel-
lency of their Original, and made them-
selves

SERM. selves lower and more vile than the Beasts

II. that perish; nay, they are not content

only to be wicked themselves, but hate and persecute those who do not run into the same Excess of Riot. Now, since the Degeneracy of Mankind is so great, it must needs so fall out, that it may sometimes be a costly and a dangerous Thing to go out of the common Road, and to forsake the beaten Track of Vice and Wickedness, when Iniquity is established by a Law, and Sin recommended by Custom (which is a second Nature) and become fashionable; he must act out of a noble Principle indeed, and look forward to the Recompence of a more excellent Reward than any this World can afford him, that dares oppose himself against the Stream, and stem the Torrent of a vicious Age. He must by an Eye of Faith behold the Glory of a future State, who can be able to condemn the perishing Enjoyments of this, and look for a House not made with Hands eternal in the Heavens; who can forego his Interest here for the Testimony of a good Conscience. There are indeed some that teach, that to serve God, out of the Hopes of Reward, is a base and mercenary Principle, below and unworthy

worthy of a Child of God, and incompatible with the high Attainments of a Christian; that God is the best and most excellent Being, and therefore to be loved and admired, served and obeyed, for his own Sake, without any Respect to our Convenience and Advantage; and that as, on the one Hand, to be frighted out of our Sins, by the Terror of Hell, is a slavish Fear: So, on the other Hand, to be allured to our Duty, by the Hopes of Reward, is rather Love to ourselves, than Love to God, and doth not entitle us to the Joys of Heaven.

BUT these Men seem to forget that Hopes and Fears are the two main Springs of all our Actions, and that God, who made us, and therefore knows us better than we do ourselves, addresses himself to both these, and throughout the Holy Writ makes our Hopes and Fears the Motives of our Obedience; and then, what high Presumption is it, for Men to pretend to be wiser than their Maker? And, what is more just than for God to deny them the Assistance of his Grace, and to suffer them to miscarry, who are too proud and too conceited, to make Use of those Helps and Assistances which he has afforded them? What must these Men think

SERM. think of themselves? Are they holier and

II. more righteous than *Moses*, who had *Respect to the Recompence of Reward*; is their Love and Zeal more fervent than that of the holy Army of Martyrs, *who were tortured, not accepting Deliverance, that they might enjoy a better Resurrection*? Would they be thought wiser and better than our Saviour *Christ* himself, *who, for the Joy that was set before him, endured the Cross, despising the Shame*? It is plain and evident, this is not required of us; God has made us reasonable Creatures, and therefore expects our reasonable Service; and that we should obey him out of such Principles as he has implanted in us.

WHAT remains therefore, but that the due and serious Consideration of those excellent and incomprehensible Rewards which God has prepared for those that love him; and of those dreadful and intolerable Punishments which God has denounced against the impenitent Offenders; should put us upon a serious Repentance for our past Sins, and a firm Resolution of yielding a sincere and universal Obedience to all the Laws of his Gospel? That so at that great Day of Account, when all the Secrets of Men's Hearts shall be laid open

open, and every one rewarded according to his Deeds, we may hear that comfortable Sentence pronounced, *Come ye blessed of my Father, inherit the Kingdom prepared for you, from the Beginning of the World*; and then with the Voice of Joy and Gladness, with the Shouts of Angels and Arch-angels, we may enter into the Joy of our Lord; who is the Rewarder of those who diligently seek him.

SERM.
II.

SERMON

S E R M O N III.

The Unity of GOD.

ISAIAH xlv. 5, 6.

*I am the Lord, and there is none else,
there is no God besides me: I girded
thee, though thou hast not known me:
That they may know from the Rising
of the Sun, and from the West, that
there is none besides me, I am the
Lord, and there is none else.*

SERM.
III.

THIS Chapter is the second Part
of that prophetic Discourse,
which begun with the fortieth
Chapter, and foretels that great
Revolution, when the *Chaldean* Monarchy
should be subverted by *Cyrus*, King of
the *Persians*, and the *Jews* be brought
back into their own Country; and this
Prophecy is so much the more remark-
able, because it was set down in such plain
and

The Unity of God.

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and intelligible Words, and the very SERM.
Name of the Prince is foretold who was III.
to be the Deliverer of the *Jews*; and
therefore God makes this the Sign that
he was the only true God, because he
could foretel so remarkable a Transaction,
so exactly, so long before it was execut-
ed: *That thou mayest know, that I the* Isa. xlv. 3.
Lord, which call thee by thy Name, am the
God of Israel. This Prophecy was pro-
nounced from the Mouth of *Isaiah*, two
hundred and ten Years before the Birth
of *Cyrus*, as *Josephus* tells us, and was
finally compleated and fulfilled by him;
who, as the same Author relates, being
shewed this Prophecy by the *Jews*, he ac-
knowledged the God of *Israel*; professed
himself his Instrument and Servant, and
sent the *Jews* home to their own Coun-
try, with many Presents and Gifts, to be
bestowed in rebuilding of the Temple.
Now, one Reason why God by the Pro-
phet, so long before and so punctually,
foretold this signal and wonderful Deli-
verance, seems to be, that hereby he might
keep up their Faith of, and Dependance on
the true God, whilst they remained amidst
many heathenish and idolatrous Nations.
For the *Jews* were a stiff-necked and a
hard-hearted Generation, and were very
prone.

SERM. prone to Idolatry, though God had made

III. the most manifest Discoveries of himself unto them, of any People in the World, and therefore the Prophets all along use their utmost Endeavour to fence and guard them from this Sin; and so God, having first raised their Attention with the Declaration of a wonderful Deliverance, takes Occasion in my Text to tell them, *I am the Lord, and there is none else, there is no God besides me.* These Words then are a plain Declaration of the Unity of the Godhead, and lay down to us this fundamental Truth, *That there is but one only true God*; which I design for the Subject of my following Discourse: In order to which I shall shew,

- I. IN what Sense this Proposition is to be understood.
- II. I SHALL demonstrate the Truth of it.
- III. I SHALL shew how it comes to pass, that a great Part of Mankind are seduced from the Belief of this Truth. And,
- IV. I SHALL draw some Inferences naturally arising from the Consideration of God's Unity.

I. I SHALL

I. I SHALL shew in what Sense this SERM.
 Proposition is to be understood, that there III.
 is but one only true God, that is, there
 is but one only, who is the first Cause
 of all Things, who created this visible
 World, and still governs it, and retains
 the supreme Dominion of it in his own
 Hands. We are told that there are Gods ^{1 Cor. v.}
many, and Lords many; and, in Scripture, ^{8.}
 Kings and great Men are called Gods; ^{IPf. lxxxii.}
have said, ye are Gods, and all of you are ^{6, 7.}
Children of the Most High; but ye shall
die like Men, and fall like one of the
Princes; i. e. They are invested with
 Power and Dominion, God has substi-
 tuted them under him, and given them
 Power and Opportunity to do Good, and
 to be beneficial to those who are under
 their Charge; and, in this Sense, every
 Man may be said to be a God to his
 Neighbour, *homo homini Deus*; i. e. He
 may supply his Wants, he may advise and
 assist him, he may help to protect him
 from Perils and Dangers, and afford him
 his Help to deliver him out of them.
 For God is the great Governor and Be-
 nefactor of Mankind, and those good
 Things which he bestows upon us, by
 the Mediation of inferior Agents, either
 Men or Angels, ought to be received with

E

a grate-

SERM. a grateful Heart and a thankful Tongue,
 III. from their Hands who are only the Instruments of conveying them to us; tho' the Praise and Glory of them ought ultimately to be terminated into the first Cause, that *God, who is the Author and Giver of every good and perfect Gift*; he alone is originally and properly said to be God; it is he alone is essentially so; Men and Angels are improperly called Gods, because they are his Vicegerents, and employed by him in the Government of the World, and in doing Good to their Fellow-creatures. And, as that supreme Being, who is the great Creator and Governor of the World, is alone essentially God, so it is impossible that any other Being should be so; the essential Attributes of God are incommunicable, and can be appropriated only to one Divine Being, so that God is not only one as a Man or Angel is one Man or one Angel; that is, distinguished by some essential Difference from all other Men or Angels; but which doth not exclude, but that there may be other Men and Angels in the World: But God has an Unity peculiar to himself, he is so one, as to exclude all others of the same Nature; he is not only one, but so one, as there

is

The Unity of God.

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is no Possibility there should be any other **SERM.**
besides him : *I am the Lord, and there is* **III.**
none else, says the Text, *there is no God*
besides me. The Truth of which I shall
endeavour,

II. To demonstrate unto you. And,

I. **THIS** Truth is plainly laid down
in other Places of the Holy Writ : *Hear,* Deut. vi. 4.
O Israel, the Lord our God is one Lord ;
and, *See now that I, even I, am he, and* Ch. xxxiii.
there is no God with me : I kill and I make 39.
alive, I wound and I heal : Neither is
there any that can deliver out of my Hand ;
and the Apostle tells us, that, *though* 1 Cor. viii.
there are many who are called Gods ; to 5, 6.
us there is but one God, the Father, of
whom are all Things, and we in him ;
and, *There is one God, and one Mediator,* 1 Tim. ii.
between God and Men. 5.

NEITHER is this only the Voice of
the Holy Scripture, but even the Voice
of Reason itself : For whoever considers
seriously that Notion which he has of a
God, must needs conclude, that there can
be but only one, to whom that Descrip-
tion can agree. Now, all Men, that ac-
knowledge a God, do agree upon these
two Things, (1.) That God is a Being
who comprehends all possible Perfecti-
on. (2.) That he is the Creator, and

SERM. the supreme Governor and Legislator of
 III. the World ; from all which it is easy to
 demonstrate, that there can be but one
 God.

FOR, (I.) if we consider God as a Being of all possible Perfection, it is plain that there can be but one God ; for, if there were two Gods, there must be some essential Difference between them, which essential Difference must be some Perfection in the one, which is not to be found in the other ; but, since the Notion of God doth imply, that he is a Being of all possible Perfection, there can be no Perfection but what is comprehended in him, and so, by Consequence, there can be but one God. Let us consider this in some particular Perfection which we attribute to God : It is agreed, on all Hands, that God is omnipotent, *i. e.* that he can do all Things that are possible to be done, and which do not imply a Contradiction ; now, if we seriously consider it, it will plainly appear, that it is impossible there should be two omnipotent Beings : For that Being, which has all Power, must have Power over all other Beings ; for, if there is any Being exempted from its Jurisdiction, it cannot be omnipotent, because it has not the Command of

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The Unity of God.

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of that Being, *i. e.* it cannot exercise its SERM.
III.
Power over it.

WHICH will more plainly appear, (2.) by considering God, as he really is, the first Cause of all Things, the great Creator and Governor of the World. For that, which is the first Cause of all Things, must necessarily exist of itself, and that, which is self-existent, is but one ; because it has no Dependance on any other Being : For, as a learned Author observes, tho' the Existence and Unity of God are two distinct Truths, yet they depend so much upon one another, that they are both expressed in one Word, and included in one Article of our Faith. Nay, we find God himself reasoning from this Topic, and proving his Unity, because he is the Original and first Cause of all Things: *Thus saith the Lord, the King of Israel, Isa. xliv. 6. and his Redeemer the Lord of Hosts, I am the first, and I am the last, and besides me there is no God.* This Argument may also receive Strength, by considering God not only as a Being of all possible Perfection, and as the first Cause of Things, but also as the great Governor and Legislator of the World. For, since God governs this World after his own free Will, and *doth according to his Will in Dan. iv.*

SERM. *the Army of Heaven, and among the In-*
 III. *habitants of the Earth, as Nebuchadnezzar*

 tells us, there cannot be two supreme Governors of the World; for, if there were, they might not always agree in their Determinations; in Things indifferent one might command one Thing, and another something else; from hence Disorder and Confusion would ensue, which would be highly derogatory from that infinite Wisdom which inspects and disposes human Affairs; so that *Tertulian* concludes, that it were far better to deny the Being of a God, than to harbour such a dishonourable Notion as this is of him in our Breasts. But still, we may argue farther from the Convenience that there should be but one Governor of the World, and we may thence reasonably conclude, that there really is but one; for we may be assured, that whatsoever is in God, is best and most perfect, because he is the most perfect Being. If, therefore, the Government by one is the most perfect Form of Government, we may be assured, it is that, which gives Laws to the World. That the Government by one is the most perfect Form of Government, has the Vote of the wisest Men in all Ages, and therefore

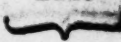
fore it is a received Axiom in the Schools, SERM.

Frustra fit per plura, quod potest fieri per III.

pauciora ; that it is in vain to make Use of more Agents and Instruments than are needful for the managing of any Affair ; it is to transcribe the Folly of that Man, who made Use of a Club to kill a Fly. Since, therefore, one God is sufficient for the Government of the World, we may be assured that there is but one who governs it. Earthly Dominions are often governed by more than one, by Reason of those Vices and Defects, which are frequently found in Governors ; the best Men have some Failings, their Heads are most apt to be giddy when they are upon the highest Pinnacle of Honour, and it is a most difficult Thing to withstand those Temptations which Grandeur and Power render them liable to ; and therefore Law-givers have in most Governments set some Limits and Bounds to their Power, not to check or awe a good Prince, but to restrain those which are bad. But now, since God is not subject to any of these Defects and Imperfections, since he is a Being of infinite Power, and Wisdom, and Goodness ; we may be assured, that he is able to foresee all Events ; he is willing to manage and direct them to the wisest

SERM. Ends; and he is sufficiently powerful to
 III. accomplish all the gracious Purposes of
 his Divine Will; so that we may safely
 conclude, that, since it is best there should
 be but one Governor of the World, there
 is no more than one.

It was this Consideration which induced *Aristotle*, that great Master of Reason, to give his Assent to this Truth; which is the more remarkable, because he laboured under this Prejudice, to wit, the Belief, that the first Cause was a necessary Agent. And, in Truth, if we make an Enquiry into the Opinions of the most virtuous and thinking Men, even amongst the Heathens themselves, we shall find, that they were prevailed upon, by the Light of natural Reason, to give their Assent to this Truth, that there was but one supreme God, contrary to those Opinions they had imbibed by Education, and which were established by the Laws of the Country in which they lived; and therefore *Plato* gave this Note to his Friends, that he has made Mention of Gods in the plural Number, in those Epistles, which were writ to the People, and which treated about trivial Matters; but, in those Letters which he sent to his familiar Friends, where he unboomed himself,

himself, and treated of the gravest and SERM.
most serious Matters, there he always III.
taught the Belief of one God; and, tho' 
with some learned Men we should re-
ject this Epistle as spurious, yet we have
Footsteps enough amongst the Antients
of the unquestionable Belief of one God.
The great *Hermes*, who was the Father
of all the Philosophers, plainly affirms
this Truth. *Pythagoras* intimates it to
us, by making Unity the Original and Cen-
ter of all Things. Even *Orpheus* himself,
who was so instrumental in promoting the
Opinion of a Multiplicity of Gods amongst
the Vulgar, as being the first Publisher
of the Genealogy of the Heathen Gods,
yet taught that there was one supreme
God, who had the Dominion and Go-
vernment over them all; which was the
Opinion of all the wisest Men amongst
the Heathens; for, as *Seneca* tells us, all
those inferior Deities, who were denoted
by the Names of *Jove*, *Neptune*, and *Plu-
to*, derived their Original from one su-
preme Being, who was therefore called
the Father of Gods and Men. The Vul-
gar, indeed, waxed more vain in their Ima-
ginations; they offered up their Sacri-
fices not only to these invisible Deities,
but also to the whole Host of Heaven,
and

SERM. and to their deceased Princes who were

III. Men like themselves ; and this provoked

God to give them up to strange Delusions, so that some of them arrived to that Folly and Madness as to worship the Beasts of the Field, and even the Leeks and Onions which grew in their Gardens ; nay, they multiplied their Deities to so great a Number, that the *Athenians* are said to have worshipped Thirty-thousand Gods ; so that, as one well observed, it was easier to find Gods than Men at *Athens*. And yet, there is no Reason why we should think them more in the Fault, than the other idolatrous Nations ; for, if there may be more Gods than one, there can be no Reason why they should be limited to any determinate Number ; and on this Footing the *Athenians* seemed to have reasoned well, who dedicated an Altar to the unknown God, lest any one of them should escape their Knowledge.

To this Sin of Idolatry God's peculiar People, the Children of *Israel* and *Judah*, were very much addicted : Though God had brought them out of the Land of *Egypt* with a very high Hand, though he had used so many Methods, and taken so great Pains, to wean them from the
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idolatrous Practices of those People amongst whom they had sojourned, yet they were a rebellious and a stiff-necked Generation, they were continually revolting from their God and their King, and other Gods besides the Lord had the Dominion over them. Even Solomon himself, the Wisest of all their Princes, went after Astoreth, the Goddess of the Zidonians, and after Milcom, the Abomination of the Ammonites, and built an high Place for Chemosh, the Abomination of Moab, and for Molech, the Abomination of the Children of Ammon. It is a very difficult Matter to give any tolerable Account, how Men could take up a Practice so directly contrary to the Light of Nature, and the Dictates of Reason, and to the Sentiments of the best and wisest Men; as for Solomon, it is not probable that he believed a Plurality of Gods, or that he followed the Dictates of his own Judgment, but that he was seduced into these Practices by the inordinate Love of strange Women, as we are told in the first Verse of this Chapter; which plainly demonstrates to us, how great Influence the Affections have over the Judgments of the best and wisest Men, and will give us some Light in the

SERM.
III.

1 King xi.
5-7.

III.

SERM. III. *Third Place*, To find out the Causes
 of so great a Corruption amongst the Sons
 of Men, and how it comes to pass, that
 so great a Part of the reasonable World
 are seduced to the Worship of many Gods.
 This proceeds from hence ;

I. BECAUSE the greatest Part of Man-
 kind are more indulgent to their Imagina-
 tion than their Reason. The greatest Part
 of our Knowledge comes in by our Sense,
 and it is a very difficult Matter to re-
 flect upon any Being without framing a
 corporeal Image of it. For the most Part
 we judge of Things unknown to us, by
 comparing them with the Ideas of such
 Things, which our Senses have rendered
 familiar to us. From hence it is, that
 we are so apt to fancy God to be such
 an one as ourselves ; and to clothe him
 not only with those Passions we feel
 ourselves endowed withal, but even to
 imagine him in Shape, Size, and Propor-
 tion to resemble some visible Being. How
 difficult a Matter is it for a Mind not
 accustomed to Speculation, to frame any
 Notion of itself, or to contemplate an in-
 finite, an immaterial, and invisible Being,
 or to conceive any other Being but such as is
 the Object of its Senses ? From whence it
 came to pass, that Men changed those Ima-

ges they had framed of God in their Minds, SERM.
into visible Representations of him ; and, III.
from a visible Representation of the true God, it was an easy Step to introduce the
Worship of false Gods ; for it was an easy
Matter, and a very obvious Mistake for
ignorant People of mean Parts and slow
Apprehension, to mistake the Representa-
tion of God, for that God which was
intended to be represented by it, and to
fancy that Divinity lodged in the Type,
which the wiser Sort only made Use of
to denote it to them.

2. THE Worship of many Gods was
also introduced into the World by those
great Honours and that Veneration, which
Men paid to those Beings, which were
most useful and beneficial to them ; for,
(1.) Men worshipped the Sun, and Moon,
and the Stars, fancying that all their Hap-
piness in this World did depend upon
their favourable Influences, and that they
were the Agents and Instruments to con-
vey down to us all those Blessings which
descend from above ; this was the first
Kind of Idolatry, as appears from that
antient Book of *Job*, *If, says he, I be-* Job xxxi.
beld the Sun when it shined, or the Moon 26—28.
walking in Brightness : And my Heart
hath been secretly enticed, or my Mouth
hath

SERM. *hath kissed my Hand : This also were an*

III. *Iniquity to be punished by the Judge, for*

I should have denied the God that is above.

Dent. iv.
19.

And the Children of *Israel* are commanded to take Heed, lest they lift up their Eyes unto Heaven, and when they see the Sun, and the Moon, and the Stars, and all the Host of Heaven, they should be driven to worship them and serve them.

FROM hence they fell to worship their deceased Kings and Princes, especially those who had been eminent for warlike Enterprises ; or, by being the Authors and Inventors of any useful Arts, had been public Benefactors to Mankind. The Design at first was, perhaps, only to celebrate their Virtues, and to keep up the Memory of their noble Deeds ; but this civil Respect was soon changed into a religious Veneration, and, from being remembered as Benefactors, they came to be worshipped as Gods. This we may the rather believe, because the same Thing has happened in these latter Ages of the World ; it was the Custom of the primitive Christians to say their Prayers at the Tombs of the Martyrs, that, by the Memory of their Patience, and Zeal, and other Christian Virtues, their Devotion might be increased, and they might be incited to perform

form the like Deeds, and be prepared to SERM.
lay down their Lives for the Testimony III.
of the Gospel, whensoever it should please
God to call them to it. From praying
at the Martyrs Tombs, they came to
mention them in their Prayers, and at
last to worship and pray to the Martyrs
themselves.

3. THE Fiction of Plurality of Gods
was much forwarded by the Corruption
of Men's Manners, and that Deluge of
Vice and Wickedness which soon cover-
ed the Face of the whole Earth; for
this in a great Measure defaced the glo-
rious Image of God, which was original-
ly imprinted upon the Minds of Men;
it blotted out of their Memories those
beautiful Descriptions of God, which they
had received from their Ancestors, and
by bending their Minds to the Delights
of their inferior Appetites, by immersing
their Souls in sensual Pleasures, rendered
them unfit to contemplate an immaterial
Being. Their Hands were full of Vio-
lence, their Minds were continually taken
up in making the best of the good Things
of this Life, and in reaping the Pleasures
which this World afforded them, and then
no Wonder if they forgot that Being that
formed them, and the God who creat-
ed

SERM. ed them. Add to this, that when they
 III. could not make God a Patron of their

~ Vices, when they found that he was of purer Eyes than to behold Iniquity, they contrived it so, that they canonised their Vices, and made Gods of the most wicked and degenerate of Mankind; they flattered their most debauched and wicked Princes, whilst they lived, into an Opinion, that they should live for ever; and when their frequent, and, for the most Part, untimely Deaths had proved them mortal, they still endeavoured to impose upon the Vulgar by a feigned Apotheosis. These are the Means and Methods by which the Opinion of a Plurality of Gods has obtained in the World; these are the Arts with which the Devil in all Ages has deceived the Sons of Men. Even in these last Times, when Men run to and fro, and Knowledge is increased, he has made Use of the same Artifices, and with Success spread the same Nets, tho' managed by more plausible Pretences, and spun with a finer Thread; but, of these, I shall have Occasion to discourse, whilst,

IV. I CONSIDER what Inferences naturally arise, from the Belief of this Article of our Faith, that there is but one only true God. Of the many Inferences which might

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might be made, I shall only select these SERM.
few. III.

I. If there is but one God, from hence we may infer that he alone ought to be worshipped. For, if we received all from God, if we depend upon him for all that we enjoy, if it is in him we live, and move, and have our Being; to him alone we ought to offer up our Praises and Adorations; and therefore that strict Precept is given, *Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and him only shalt thou serve.* Matth. iv. 10. And with good Reason, for only he, who is omnipresent, can hear all our Prayers in all Places and at all Times; he, who is omnipotent, can supply all our Wants; he, who is omniscient, knows what is best for us; and he, who is Truth itself, will make good all his Promises to such as love and obey him. And therefore, it is for this Reason God requires that we should devote all we have to his Service, because there is but one God. There is but one Being of infinite Perfection to attract our Love; there is but one supreme Lord and Master to require our Service. *Hear, O Israel, the Lord our God is one Lord; therefore* Deut. vi. 5. (as the Word in the Original ought to be translated) *thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all*
F *thine*

SERM. *thine Heart, and with all thy Soul, and with*

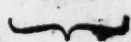
III. *all thy Might, i. e.* Thou shalt not only yield up thy Affections to him, it is not sufficient that thy Heart be filled with the Love and Admiration of his transcendent Excellencies, unless thy Will be conformed unto his Divine Will, and thou yieldest a steady and uniform Obedience unto his Laws. It is true, if there were more Gods than one, we could not love them all with all our Heart; for either our Affections would be divided between them, or we should *hate the one and love the other*, as our Saviour tells us. But, since there is but one only true God, we ought to render unto him the Glory due unto his Name.

Matth. vi.
24.

2. HENCE we may learn, whither we ought to flee for Safety and Protection, in a Time of Danger and Distress. For, since there is but one supreme Lord and Governor of the World, since he has permitted, nay, commanded us, to approach his Throne with Boldness, and Assurance of obtaining his Assistance, and Deliverance out of all Calamities, it is from him alone that we ought to seek for Succour; and it is to the Shadow of his Wings that we ought to flee for Refuge. This Consideration ought to comfort every good Man

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Man in a Time of Trouble, and support SERM.
him under all the Afflictions which can III.
possibly befall him: That the same God, 
who lays these Afflictions on him, can
remove them, when he sees good so to
do; that it is the great Governor of the
World has made this his Lot and Por-
tion, because he knows it is best for him;
and that the same God, who punishes
him in this World, will reward him in the
next.

3. HENCE we may infer, how great
a Crime those of the Church of *Rome*
are guilty of, who endeavour to wrest the
Government of the World out of God's
Hands, and transfer that Worship to Saints
and Angels, which is due to God alone.
For, if there is but one Lord and Gover-
nor of the World, then all Power and
Dominion is due to him; and he that
assumes to himself any Power, which is
not derived from him, intrenches upon
his Prerogative, and places himself in his
Throne. Such a Dominion as this have
those of the Church of *Rome* bestowed
upon Saints and Angels, and especially up-
on the blessed Virgin; they pray to them,
they worship them, they adore them,
without shewing so much as the least Com-
mand or Warrant in Scripture so to do.

SERM. And though they pretend, that they only pray to the Saints to pray to God for them, yet it is evident, that they make such Addresses to them, especially to the Virgin *Mary*, as are only proper to be made to God himself. For they devote themselves to her Service and Honour, resign themselves to her Will and Pleasure, and commit themselves and all their Affairs to her Guidance and Protection. They make Vows to her in their Distress, offer Thanks and Praise to her for their Deliverance, beg her Assistance in all Difficulties and Dangers, and particularly at the Hour of Death; and all this without the least Mention of her interceding for them, as may be plainly seen in *our Lady's Psalter*; nay, some of them have placed her in a Throne above God himself; and it is common to pray unto her, to command her Son to answer their Requests. These Things are so notorious, that they want no Proof, since they are found in their own Missals; and yet so evident and shameful a Violation of God's Power and Authority, that even those, who practise them, endeavour, what in them lies, to conceal and excuse them.

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4. AND, *Lastly*, hence we may infer, SERM.
that all those, who agree in the Worship III.
of one God, ought to maintain brotherly
Love and Charity one for another ; for,
since we are the Servants of one Master,
the Subjects of one King and Governor,
nay, the Children of one common Parent,
it is certainly our Duty to keep Peace and
Friendship, and brotherly Love one with
another. For, since there is but one Cause
of all Things, we may be assured, that
he is a Principle of Order, and Harmony,
and Agreement ; since there is but one
supreme King and Governor of the World,
we may be assured that he requires his
Subjects should live in Love and Peace,
and will punish all such as harbour any
Hatred, Envy, Malice, Variance, Emula-
tion, Wrath, Strife. And, therefore, the
Apostle, exhorting the *Ephesians* to Love
and Unanimity, doth it from this Topic ;
because there is *one God and Father of Ephes. iv.*
all ; with whose Words I shall conclude. 6.

Verse 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6.

*I therefore, the Prisoner of the Lord,
beseech you, that ye walk worthy of the
Vocation wherewith ye are called, with
all Lowliness and Meekness, with long Suf-
fering, forbearing one another in Love,
endeavouring to keep the Unity of the Spi-*

SERM. *rit in the Bond of Peace, because there is*

III. *one Body, and one Spirit, even as ye are
called in one Hope of your Calling; one
Lord, one Faith, one Baptism, one God
and Father of all, who is above all, and
through all, and in you all. To whose
most blessed Name let us ascribe, as is
most due, all Honour, Glory, Praise,
Power, and Dominion, now and for
ever.*

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S E R M O N IV.

The Trinity in Unity.

1 JOHN V. 7.

There are three that bear Record in Heaven, the Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghost ; And these three are one.

TH E S E Words have been very much canvased by Interpreters; some have acknowledged them to be genuine, whilst others have rejected them as spurious, and inserted by some other Hand, than that of the Penman of the sacred Text : True it is, that they were omitted in some Copies, but this happened by the Oversight and Carelessness of some Transcribers ; for it is evident, that the most antient Copies have them. That this is Fact, and that the Words are a true and genuine Part of the Holy Scripture, hath been fully proved By several able Hands; and therefore I

SERM.
IV.

SERM. shall not spend my present Time in re-

IV. peating what hath been said on this Head, but, taking them for genuine, as being agreeable to the Analogy of Faith, and confirmed by other Texts of unquestionable Authority, I shall endeavour to give such an Account of the Truths they contain as may serve to establish this Article of our Creed concerning the *Trinity in Unity*, to fence it against the Objections of prophane and atheistical Men, and to confirm the true Sons of the Church in their most holy Faith.

I do not intend to soar up into any curious Speculations, or to dive into the unfathomable Depth of this Mystery, or to solve the nice and no less impertinent Questions spun from School-learning: But to shew you in plain and intelligent Terms what is to be known concerning this Mystery, and to lay down such Considerations as may be serviceable to extricate the Mind of every honest and sincere Christian, from those Difficulties he may possibly labour under, as to the Doctrine of *The Trinity in Unity*.

AND, that what I have to say, on this Subject, may be more intelligible, I shall prosecute my Discourse in the following Method:

I. I SHALL

I. I SHALL shew that the Doctrine of *the Trinity in Unity* could never have been discovered by the Light of Reason, nor can it be comprehended by it.

II. THAT this Doctrine is plainly revealed to us in the Holy Scripture.

III. THAT this is a fundamental Doctrine, and absolutely necessary to be believed.

IV. I SHALL consider the Reasons, why learned Men err so much in their Disquisitions concerning it.

V. I SHALL lay down some Rules, by the Use of which we may proceed most safely in the Contemplation of it.

VI. *and Lastly*, I SHALL make some plain Inferences from the foregoing Discourse.

I. I AM to shew that the Doctrine of *the Trinity in Unity* could never have been discovered by human Reason, nor can it be comprehended by it.

THE Plumb-line of human Reason is too short, to fathom the unsearchable Abyss of the Divine Nature. We may, indeed, by the Disquisitions of Reason spell out this Truth from the Book of Nature, that there is a God, and that this first and most perfect Being must be the Source
and

SERM. and Fountain of all those Perfections,

IV. which are derived down to his Creatures;

but, what those essential Properties, which constitute the Divine Nature, are, we can by no other Means learn with Certainty, than by Revelation. For these Perfections, considered as they are in God, are infinite, and must needs transcend our finite Capacities. Nay, it is highly probable, there are many Perfections in the Divine Nature, which we are wholly ignorant of; and, therefore, it may well be made a Question, which of the two implies the greatest Absurdity, That there should be no God at all, or, That there should be such a supreme Being, as might be comprehended by his Creatures? Unity is a Perfection which, natural Reason, as well as Revelation, informs us, belongs to the Deity; but that there are three Persons in the Godhead, and that these three Persons are but one God, could never have entered into the Mind of Man, if it had not been revealed from above.

FOR it is a different Thing to find out a Truth by the Dint of Reason, and to give probable Arguments for the Establishing of it, when it is discovered to us; the latter has been attempted both by antient and modern Reasoners about

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this Article of *the Trinity in Unity* ; the former could never have been effected, but by the Revelation of God's Holy Spirit. SERM.
IV.

For it is highly foolish and absurd for us to fancy, that our Thoughts are like God's Thoughts, and our Understandings commensurate to an infinite Mind. Alas ! we are Masters of very little true and solid Knowledge ; we behold only the Shell and Outside of Things in this Life, and that through a Glass darkly : And, if we are so ignorant of those Things we daily converse with, it is no Wonder, that the Being of an infinite God should exceed the Compass of our weak Understandings. Our Reason, like a good Telescope, may serve to assist us in the Contemplation of those Truths which are near us ; but God dwells in Light inaccessible, and is too far removed from our Sphere, and too bright to be comprehended, by the glimmering Light of human Reason. And, therefore, the Way to obtain any true and solid Knowledge, concerning this mysterious Article of our Faith, is to have Recourse to the Holy Scriptures, and there we shall find,

II. *Secondly*, THAT this Truth of *the Trinity in Unity* is plainly and clearly revealed to us. We do not, indeed, find it

SERM. it in exprefs Words in the Holy Bible;

IV. that there is one God, and three Persons in the Godhead ; but it is as plainly affirmed, as Words can exprefs it, that there is a Father, a Son, and an Holy Ghost ; that the Father is God, the Son is God, and the Holy Ghost is God ; and that these Three are not three Gods, but one God. But the Manner how these Three are One, or this One is Three, is not explained to us in the Holy Writ, either because it was not necessary for us to know it, or because we were not capable of comprehending it.

OUR Reason itself teaches us, that a Point of this Nature is beyond its Reach, and, like a good Mercury, points out to us the Way by which we must come to the Knowledge of the Truth ; that those Divine Oracles testify of God the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, and unfold to us as much of these mysterious Truths as are necessary for us to know, in Order to obtain eternal Salvation ; and he that endeavours to taste this Tree of Knowledge, and to know more than God has been pleased to reveal to him, may perhaps fancy himself more enlightened, and the Eye of his Mind opened wider than before ; but it will be only to discern

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cern the Evil, and not the Good. And, SERM.
therefore, we find, that God was pleased IV.
to make different Discoveries of himself, 
in the different Ages of the World, such
as were most agreeable to the then pre-
sent Condition of Mankind. The *Gen-*
tiles were under the Conduct of Nature,
and therefore knew no more of God,
than what natural Light or the Improve-
ments of Reason discovered to them. To
the *Jews*, who were under the more im-
mediate Conduct of God, and whose Go-
vernment was a Theocracy, God more
particularly revealed his Mind and Will,
and made brighter Discoveries of him-
self; and it is probably thought that the
Doctrine of *the Trinity in Unity* was not
unknown, though not so clearly revealed
to them as to us Christians: And therefore,
it is required,

III. *Thirdly*, THAT we should give
our sincere and hearty Assent to this fun-
damental Article of our Faith, and that
for this plain Reason, because we cannot
understand the Christian Religion with-
out the Belief of *the Trinity in Unity*.
The whole Oeconomy of Man's Salva-
tion by *Jesus Christ* turns upon this Ar-
ticle, That God the Father gave his only
begotten Son to die for us, and that he
with

SERM. with the Son sent the Holy Spirit to en-

IV. able us to close with those Terms which

he has made necessary, in order to receive the Benefit of the second Covenant, and to obtain the Pardon and Forgiveness of our Sins, and to walk in the Way of his Commandments. We can never understand the Mystery of Godliness, God manifest in the Flesh, without the previous Knowledge of the Mystery of the Trinity. For, how can we conceive the Satisfaction of our Saviour, without knowing that he was God as well as Man, or receive any Benefit by his mediatorial Office, without looking upon him who was crucified, as able to save to the uttermost all those who come unto him. How can we understand the Unction of the Holy Ghost, without considering him as a Person distinct from the Father and the Son? Or receive the Benefits of his Mission, unless we believe that he is different from those who send him? So necessary is it to believe the Doctrine of the Trinity, in order to come to the Knowledge of the Means and Methods of our Salvation by *Jesus Christ*.

BUT, though it is necessary that we should believe the Doctrine of the Trinity, yet it is not necessary that we should

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Three, or these Three are One ; we do IV.
not find this revealed in the Leaves of the Holy Bible, because it is not necessary to be known, and has very little Influence on our Lives and Conversations ; these are rather some of those curious Questions which minister to the Gendering Strife ; and therefore it is no Wonder, if the Holy Scriptures are silent in this Matter. But yet, vain Man would fain be wise, and we find more Controversies about this Article of our Faith, even in the Primitive Times, than any other whatsoever ; which has not only disturbed the Peace of the Church, but very much perplexed the Thoughts of many honest and well-meaning People, and employed too much of the Time and Pains of learned Men. And, what has been the Result of all their Enquiries, but that, by a too near and intent Contemplation of this glorious Object, they have only dazzled their Sight, being blinded into Scepticism and Atheism, and have been more at a Loss in explaining this Article, than those who have taken up with the plain Truths delivered to us in the Holy Scripture ? Which brings me to shew the Reasons,

IV. WHY

SERM. IV. WHY learned Men go so much
 IV. astray in the Explication of this Article
 of their Faith.

I. BECAUSE they are too curious and inquisitive in the Search after those Things which God has not been pleased to reveal to them. They are not content to be wise according to Godliness, but they will break in upon the Mount, and taste of the forbidden Fruit, though they know that God has placed a flaming Sword to defend it, and Thunderings and Lightnings to keep them off; and thus endeavouring to become wise in those Things, which are beyond the Reach of their Reason, they neglect to cultivate that Field of Knowledge committed to their Care, and become ignorant even of the most common and useful Matters; for, whilst Men fill their Heads with airy and fantastical Notions, nice Distinctions, and subtle Divisions, which have no solid Foundation in Nature or Reason, they become vain in their Imaginations, and their contemplative Faculties, being used to feed upon such Trash and unwholesome Food, will not relish or digest those plain and intelligible Notions, which would afford them sound and good Nourishment. It is the too common Fault of contemplative

ive Men, that they love to forsake the safe SERM.
and common Road, and affect to travel in IV.
an unbeaten Path, though hereby they
bewilder their Reason, and are misguided
by those false Lights, and blinded with
that Dust which themselves have raised.

2. A SECOND Reason, why learned
Men err so much in their Explications
of this Article of our Faith, is, because
they make Use of School Terms and Dis-
tinctions without fixing any settled and
determined Notion to them; for there
is no where more Reason to make Use
of the Apostle's Caution to *beware of vain
Philosophy*, than in the Discussion and Ex-
planation of this Article; because to scan-
dle the Being of a God, by the Maxims of the
Schools, is not to make Use of our Rea-
son, but to abuse it; it is to go exactly con-
trary to that first and fundamental Rule
of Reason, *i. e.* to try only those Things
by Reason, which Reason itself tells us
are properly the Objects of it. But when
Men, to conceal and hide their own Igno-
rance, shall make Use of such Terms and
Distinctions as they themselves have no
settled Notion of, and as are not ade-
quate nor applicable to the Object; this is
to give us Words instead of Sense, it is
ludere cum sacris, to trifle and make Sport
G with

SERM. with the most sacred Things in the World,
 IV. and so far from playing the Philosophers,
 that it is stooping themselves below the
 Dignity of Men, and falling short of com-
 mon Sense.

PHILOSOPHY is certainly the Hand-
 maid to Divinity, and therefore it is very
 commendable to make Use of it in the
 most sacred Things; it is the Voice of
 right Reason, and the Dictate of Nature,
 which is the Voice of God. But it is
 certainly a very great Abuse of Reason,
 under the Pretence of Philosophy, to in-
 troduce such Terms into Divinity as are
 not intelligible, and such Distinctions as
 have no discernible Difference; to make
 Use of them in explaining the Mysteries
 of Religion, and defending those Para-
 doxes which they themselves have form-
 ed, to be a sure Shelter and Place of
 Retreat, when they are pressed by an Ar-
 gument, under the Umbrage of which
 they may conceal their own Ignorance;
 so that, though they have nothing to re-
 ply, yet they will have always something
 to say.

IT is very certain that the Art of
 Reasoning and the Terms of School Di-
 vinity may be of very good Use to learn-
 ed Men: They may be hereby assisted to
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dispose their Thoughts in the better Or- SERM.
der, to discover the Force and the weak IV.
Side of an Argument, and where the Fal-
lacy lies, and by the Use of proper Rules
and Distinctions, to avoid Confusion of
Thought and the Taking one like Thing
for another; but it is as certain that no
Part of Learning has been more intoler-
ably abused, and made to serve Purposes
more different from those it was at first
designed for; to render the most plain
Things difficult, to cloath Ignorance in
the specious Garb of Knowledge and
Science, and to render those Things of
which we have distinct Notions confused
and unintelligible.

To apply this to the Point in Hand,
when the Holy Scripture has taught us,
that there is one God, and that there
are three Divine Persons in the God-
head, and has given us only a distant
View of this Mystery, without explain-
ing it to us: How vain and foolish then
is it for Men to endeavour to explain
either by the Rules of Reason, or Terms
of Art, what they confess they cannot
comprehend, or form any distinct No-
tion of? Would it not be much better
to lay our Mouths in the Dust, to ac-
knowledge our Ignorance, and to make

SERM. our useless and unprofitable Curiosity give
IV. Place to Admiration and Devotion?

3. ANOTHER Reason, why learned Men err so much about this Article of Faith, is, because they are so intent upon one Part of the Question, that they do not sufficiently consider the other; and, whilst they are solicitously careful to avoid one Absurdity, they fall into the contrary Extrem. Thus, some Writers are so intent to preserve a Trinity of Persons and a real Difference between them, that they frame an Hypothesis which is altogether inconsistent with the Divine Unity; whilst on the other Hand there are others, who are so careful to fix the Notion of the Unity of the Godhead, that they utterly evacuate the Notion of the Trinity. Were both these more cool in their Pursuits, and more moderate in their Censures, they would find, that the chief Subject of their Dispute is agreed on all Hands, and that it is the *Modus* or Manner alone, which is controverted: The first is necessary to be believed, because plainly revealed; the other not so, because left undetermined in the Holy Scripture.

4. A FOURTH and principal Reason, why learned Men wander so far from Truth in their Disquisitions concerning
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this Article of their Faith, *the Trinity in Unity*, is, because they draw such Con-
clusions and Consequences from the Opinions of their Adversaries, as they never
thought of, and do detest. For a Man
may affirm a Thing, and not be answer-
able for all the Consequences, much less
for such Consequences as others make
for him. And therefore, no Man ought
to be charged with the Consequences of
his Opinions, unless they are such as na-
turally and evidently flow from them,
and which, it may rationally be presum-
ed, he was conscious of ; (for a Man
may lay down a Position without attend-
ing to the Consequences of it ; and so
great is the Imperfection of our Under-
standings, that we cannot attend to many
Things at the same Time, nor take in
any great Compass of Thought ; nay,
we are forced to take Things in Pieces,
to look upon them in a different Light
and Position, in order to understand them)
and therefore it is but just that we should
give the most candid and charitable Con-
struction of other Men's Opinions, that
they will bear ; and lay nothing to their
Charge which they disown, if it will
admit of a more favourable Interpreta-
tion. There is nothing more common,
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IV.

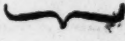
SERM. than, when Men dispute concerning this
 IV. Article of our Faith, *the Trinity in Unity*, to make Use of hard Names instead of Arguments, and to load one another with such odious Imputations, as no one would willingly have laid upon himself; and from hence have proceeded the greatest Divisions and Animosities that ever pestered the Church.

AND thus having shewed, from what Source and Fountain the different Expli- cations of this Article of our Creed have proceeded, I come,

V. To lay down such Rules as are necessary to be observed in our Disqui- sitions, concerning this mysterious Arti- cle of our Faith.

FOR, though it is to no Purpose to strive, by the Dint of Reason, to explain this Mystery, and the Church, in the *Nicene* and *Athanasian* Creeds, which are only Explications and Comments on the Apostles Creed, rather tells us what we ought not to believe, than teaches us what we ought to affirm in this Mat- ter; and though those, who have en- deavoured and gone about it, have wax- ed vain in their Imaginations, and mis- carried egregiously in their Pursuits after that Knowledge which transcends their
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limited Capacities ; yet, since God has SERM.
been pleased to reveal this stupendous IV.
Truth to us, it is our Duty, when we 
meditate thereon, to consider,

1. **WHAT** the Holy Scripture says concerning it.

2. To determine nothing concerning those Points in which the Holy Scriptures are silent.

3. **WHERE** the Sacred Text is obscure, to incline rather to that Interpretation of it which is agreeable to Reason, the Analogy of Faith, and the Tenor of the Law and Gospel.

4. **WHERE** Revelation is deficient, to sit down and be content to be ignorant.

5. **UTTERLY** to reject all such Explications as are not agreeable to the Sacred Text, how rational soever they may appear to be.

I SHALL not expatiate upon these Rules, but leave them with you, as useful Directions to guide your Thoughts and Enquiries, whenever you meditate on the great Mystery of *the Trinity in Unity*. And now, having set down my Thoughts on this so much controverted Article of our Faith, with as much Plainness as I could, which will, I hope, afford some

SERM. Satisfaction to timorous and doubting, but
IV. well-meaning People ; I come

VI. *and Lastly*, To raise some useful
Inferences from what has been said. And,

I. HENCE we may observe, that the Christian Religion obliges us to believe nothing that is not conformable to the Dictates of right Reason. Its Mysteries are, indeed, above Reason, but not contrary, or contradictory to it ; and 'tis highly rational to hearken to the Voice of Revelation in such Points, as, Reason itself tells us, are beyond its Reach. 'Tis observed in the Works of Nature, that God never uses extraordinary Means, and puts himself to the Expence of a Miracle, but in such Cases where the ordinary Means are insufficient to perform the Effect : And 'tis as observable concerning the Articles of our Faith, that where a Point may be deduced from common Topics, or the Principles of Natural Religion, there we ought not to insist upon a Revelation to attest it. For the chief Design of Revelation is to discover to us such Truths, as human Reason could never have reached, and to display such Motives to embrace these Truths, as are not with equal Force and Certainty to be drawn from rational Principles ; and, if so, then

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2. HENCE we may observe, how much SERM.
those Persons are to blame, who set up Faith IV.
in Opposition to Reason. Their whole Bu-
siness is to declaim against Reason, to am-
plify its Frailty, to increase its Errors, and
to expose its Inability to direct us in the
right Way, that hereby they may persuade
us to give up our Reason to our Faith;
that is, to whatsoever they shall please to
impose upon us; little considering, that
he, who vilifies Reason, doth what in him
lies to undermine that Foundation upon
which Faith itself is built. For we cannot
believe any Assertion, on any other Ac-
count than this, that, on the Authority
and Evidence it brings with it, we judge
it reasonable to be believed. Faith and
Reason therefore are not opposite to, but
mutually help and assist each other; and
that Faith, which is not built upon a rea-
sonable Foundation, is, indeed, Presump-
tion and Confidence, but very improperly
called Faith. And therefore,

3. FROM hence we may observe a wide
Difference between the Belief of this Doc-
trine of the Trinity in Unity, and of that
of Transubstantiation. 'Tis the common
Evasion of the Papists, when they are pres-
sed with the Absurdities which naturally
follow from the Doctrine of Transubstanti-
ation,

SERM. ation, to assert, that we may as easily be-

IV. lieve this, as the Doctrine of the Trinity.

They will confess that this Doctrine of Transubstantiation, or Turning the Bread and Wine into the very Body and Blood of Christ, can never be reconciled to Reason; but then, say they, we must submit our Reason to our Faith, and our Senses to Revelation: And that it is as reasonable that we should do so in this Article of Transubstantiation, as in any of the other mysterious Points of our Religion; and they instance particularly in this Doctrine of the Trinity in Unity; not considering, that there is a wide Difference between these two; and our Assent to these two Articles, *viz.* the Trinity in Unity, and Transubstantiation, is required from different Motives; the one being properly the Object of Sense, the Knowledge of the other not attainable, but by Divine Revelation, which takes Place in such Matters, as cannot be determined from the Principles of Reason, or Verdict of our Senses. And therefore we ought not to expect that God should make Use of any extraordinary Way (as Divine Revelation certainly is) to discover to us those Truths, which may easily be known by the Use of our Reason and Senses. How foolish would it be for a

Man

The Trinity in Unity.

91

SERM.
IV.

Man to search the Bible, to prove that there is a Difference between Black and White, Hard and Soft, or to expect a Revelation to discover those Truths, which no Body doubts of ; and no less ridiculous is it, for a Man to inquire whether that, which all his Senses tell him is Bread and Wine, is not the real Body and Blood of Christ ? And, therefore, when any Text of Scripture seems to contradict the Verdict of our Senses, it is plain that it is not to be taken in a literal Sense ; whereas the Doctrine of the Trinity in Unity is a Point, which is beyond the Ken of Sense or Reason, and can be discovered to us by no other Means, than that of Divine Revelation ; and therefore all that we understand, about it, must be dug out of those Depths of Knowledge, the Holy Scriptures, and revealed to us from above ; and what we find plainly revealed ought to be assented to : For to scan these divine Truths, by the Maxims of Reason, would be as foolish an Employment, as to endeavour to span the Distance between Heaven and Earth, or to fathom the Sea with a Plum-line of a Yard long. Our Faith is the Hand which alone can lay hold of those Mysteries, and the

SERM. the more strong our Faith is, the more

IV. reasonable we are; and therefore,

4. *and Lastly*, we may from hence learn to be candid and charitable, and to avoid all hard Censuring, and fierce Contention, about these Matters, and especially Imposing upon others such Articles of Faith, as are not expressly revealed in the Holy Scriptures. 'Tis evident there is nothing we are more at a Loss in, than to explain the Doctrine of the Trinity in Unity; and yet there is no Point which has been controverted with more unchristian Zeal, and unwarrantable Contention, both in the primitive and more modern Times: Which seems to proceed chiefly from hence; because pious and learned Men are apt to be too fond of the Issue of their own Brains, and therefore endeavour to impose them as legitimate upon others, and oblige them to follow what they themselves do not understand, nor can give any clear or plain Explication of; which would be in a great Measure prevented, by the Observation of this plain Rule: To hold fast what is clearly revealed in the Holy Scripture, and mutually to forbear one another, as to those Points which are obscure and difficult to be understood. For God is not so hard a Task-master to us, as we are to
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one another ; he has made the most useful SERM.
Truths the most plain and intelligible ; IV.
and those, which are not so, are less neces-
sary to be believed : And is it not highly
unreasonable, that, when God has been so
kind to us, we should be so inexorable
one towards another ?

*God grant that we may hold fast the
Truth in all Things necessary and funda-
mental: And that we may so follow after
Truth, as to retain that divine Grace of
Charity, through Jesus Christ the Prince of
Peace, to whom, with the Father, and the
Holy Ghost, three Persons and one God, be
given all Obedience, Worship, Praise, and
Glory, now and for ever.*

S E R M O N

S E R M O N V.

The Eternity of GOD.

P S A L M xc. 2.

Before the Mountains were brought forth, or ever thou hadst formed the Earth and the World : Even from everlasting to everlasting, thou art God.

SERM.
V.

THIS Psalm is the first of the fourth Part of the Collection of Psalms, and is, by most Interpreters, acknowledged to be a Prayer of *Moses*, at that Time, when the People of *Israel* so highly provoked God (by murmuring against him, and believing that evil Report which the Spies brought of the promised Land, *Numb. xiv.*) that he shortened their Lives, and reduced them to threescore and ten, or fourscore Years at the most. At this Time, *Moses* prays to God

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God for the Forgiveness of their Sin ; and SERM.
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that God's Judgments might have a good Effect, to better and reform them. He

begins his Prayer with an Acknowledgement of God's particular Kindness towards their Fore-fathers, who were under his immediate Protection, guided and defended by him, when they were Strangers in the Land of Canaan : *Lord, thou hast been our Dwelling-place in all Generations,*

Ver. 1. which was a reasonable Ground to excite their Trust and Confidence in God, who was not only the same God at that Time that he was, in the Time of their Fore-fathers ; but also had an infinite, almighty Being, before the Creation of the World ; and would be the same after the Frame of this World should be dissolved.

Before the Mountains were brought forth, or ever thou hadst formed the Earth and the World : Even from everlasting to everlasting, thou art God. The Words then are

a plain Acknowledgement of God's eternal Duration ; and tho', in the literal and strict Sense of them, they only imply thus much : That God was the great Creator of the World, and therefore did exist before this World was created, and would do so after it was reduced to its first nothing and dissolved ; yet if we consider
the

SERM. the Manner of Scriptural Expressions, and

V.  how usual it is to lay down the most sublime Truths, in such Terms as are suitable to vulgar Capacities ; we may reasonably conclude, that there was a further Design in them ; and that from hence we may infer, that God did not only exist before, from the Foundation of the World, but also from all Eternity ; and that, as his Being had no Beginning, so it shall never have an End. For that, which is the Cause of all Things, must be without any Cause itself ; and that Principle, to which all Things must be reduced, must be without any Beginning ; as shall be proved more at large by and by. Which that I may perform with the more Plainness and Perspicuity, I shall proceed in the following Method :

I. I SHALL shew what Notion we have of *Eternity*.

II. IN what Sense God may be said to be *eternal*.

III. THAT God is thus *eternal*.

IV. WHAT we may learn from the Consideration of this Truth, that God is an *eternal* Being.

I. WHAT

I. WHAT Notion we have of *Eternity*-SERM.
 y. It must be confessed, that it is an im- V.
 possible Thing for any human Mind, to
 form a full and adequate Notion of *Eterni-*
 ty; for, since that which is infinite can-
 not be contained or comprehended by any
 finite Being, it would be a vain and fool-
 ish Thing to endeavour to frame a clear
 and plain Notion, of an infinite Duration.
 Nay, since the Weakness of our Intellect
 is such, that we cannot clearly discern
 what are the essential Properties of Time;
 but that there are many Questions about
 it, which will puzzle the most sagacious
 and knowing Enquirer; therefore we may,
 with good Reason, be contented to sit
 down in the Dark, and to be ignorant of
 that which surpasses our Knowledge. For
 Time is a Being we are continually conver-
 sant about, which seems to be obvious to
 every Considerer; but *Eternity* is of such
 an abstruse Nature, that it requires the
 most nice Abstraction of our Minds, the
 greatest Intension of our Thoughts to
 consider it; and like Men who stand upon
 a high Place, and behold Things at a great
 Distance, our Heads turn round, and our
 Thoughts are confused, when we fix our
 Contemplations on it: And therefore I
 have not undertaken to state the full No-

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tion

SERM. tion of *Eternity*, but only to consider what

V. those Thoughts are, which present themselves, when we meditate on this Subject. Now that Notion which we have of *Eternity* is, that it is a Duration which has neither Beginning nor End ; so that, in *Eternity*, we consider a double Respect : If we look forwards, it will have no End ; if backwards, we can never arrive at a Beginning ; thus, tho' we cannot comprehend distinctly what *Eternity* is, yet we may be assured that some Beings are *eternal*, and that those, which are so, have neither End nor Beginning. In like Manner, tho' we cannot comprehend God's infinite Essence, yet we may be assured, that God doth exist, and that, in his Being, necessary Existence is implied. That we may have the clearer Notion of this, it may be necessary to consider the Difference between Time, Perpetuity, and *Eternity* : Time has both Beginning and Ending ; Perpetuity has a Beginning, but no Ending ; but *Eternity* has neither Ending nor Beginning. So that the Difference between Time and *Eternity* seems to be the same there is between a River and the Ocean ; the one has its Rise and Fall, we know where it begins, and where it ends ; but the Ocean is unexhausted and boundless, and continually

ly flows with a circular and never-ending SERM.

Motion. This is that Notion of *Eternity*, V.

which on all Hands is agreed on; but there

are some who would have this Property

included in its Description, that, as it has

no Parts, so it wants all Succession; that

there is in it neither past, present, nor to

come; and accordingly *Boetius* describes

quod sit interminabilis vitæ tota simul &

perfecta possessio. And the Distinction these

Men make between Time and *Eternity*

this: That Time is a successive Duration,

which is made up of many Moments, one

immediately following after the other:

Whereas *Eternity* is fixed and immovea-

ble; has no Difference of former and lat-

ter, but, like a Point, exists altogether,

and is constituted of one never-ceasing *Now*:

but because this is disputed with great

Heat on both Sides, and both Opinions are

enriched with inexplicable Difficulties, I

shall not take upon me to decide this

Question, since the more plain and obvi-

ous Notion may be sufficient to make the

answering of my second Question more

easy.

II. How God may be said to be eter-

nal. Which that we may the better un-

derstand, it will be necessary to consider,

that, in Scripture, three Sorts of Things are

SERM. said to be *eternal*: 1. Such Things as were

V. of long Duration, though they had both a Beginning and Ending. Thus, when a Servant was resolved to live with his Master; and, according to that Constitution, in the *Jewish* Law, had his Ear bored, it is said that he should be a *Servant for ever*, that is, 'till the Year of *Jubilee*. And *Canaan* is said to be given to *Abraham*, and his Seed, *for an everlasting Possession*. 2. When a Thing has no End, though it has a Beginning; and thus Angels, and the Souls of Men, are everlasting, and future Rewards and Punishments are *eternal*. 3. That which hath neither Beginning nor Ending; and thus God alone is truly and properly *eternal*.

SINCE, therefore, other Things in the Holy Scriptures are said to be *eternal*, besides God, we must endeavour to distinguish between that *Eternity*, which is truly and properly called so, and that which is only taken in a figurative and metaphorical Sense; which may be done by considering the Nature of that Being which is said to be *eternal*, and the Circumstances of the Place where it is said to be so. Thus, when *Hills* are said to be *everlasting*, it is plain, that the Reason why they are called

Gen. xlix.
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so is, because they are not so subject to SERM.
Change, as other Bodies are, but will en- V.
dure and remain in the same Place, to
the End of the World. Sacrifices are cal-
led perpetual, because they were to re-
main, 'till abolished by that Law-giver,
who first enjoined and commanded them.
And lastly, *Life* is said to be *everlasting*, be- Dan. xii.
cause it will never have any End. Where- 2.
as it is plain, that God is said to be *eter-*
nal, because his Nature is so; all his Per-
fections are infinite, have neither Bounds,
nor Limits, nor Shadow of Change; it is
essential to him to be without Beginning,
and to have no End of Days; and, in
some Translations of the Bible, the Word,
Jehovah, is always rendered by, *the E-*
ternal; denoting to us, that though other
Beings may in a metaphorical Sense be said
to be *eternal*, yet God alone is *the Eternal*,
by Way of Eminence; it is he alone in- Isa. lvii.
habiteth Eternity, it has been his Dwelling- 15.
place for ever. He alone is the Source and
Original of all that *Eternity* which finite
Beings enjoy, and therefore must be him-
self, in a more perfect and transcendent
Sense, essentially and infinitely *eternal*.
And this I the rather remark, because
Eternity, in the Holy Scriptures, is attri-
buted

SERM. buted to God after such a Manner, as may

V. best suit with the Capacities of the vulgar

— Readers, who are the greatest Part of Mankind, for whose Benefit and Advantage it was calculated. His *Eternity* is

described by the Parts of Time, either past, present, and to come; as in the Text, *even from everlasting to everlasting,*

Rev. i. 8. *thou art God. And, I am Alpha and Omega, the Beginning and Ending, saith the Lord, which is, and which was, and which is to come, or, which will be,* for thus the Word *ἔξ ὧν* signifies: And

Acts xviii. thus it is taken, *He bade them farewell,* 21. *saying, I must by all Means keep this Feast that cometh in Jerusalem, i. e. the Feast which is to come, or will be kept. It is also expressed as if God did exist, and performed some Action, before the Creation of the World; The*

Prov. viii. *Lord possessed me in the Beginning of his* 22. *Way, before his Works of old; which, Words spoken of Wisdom, denote only such a Perpetuity, as may be common to God with Men and Angels. But God's Eternity is seldom, or no where, expressed by such Words, as denote, in a plain and literal Sense, that God had no Beginning at all; but we are left to collect this, from such Truths as are laid down, and to work*

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 casion of which may be, that the Design V.
 of the Holy Scriptures is, to make Men
 wise unto Salvation, not to fill their Heads
 with nice and unprofitable Truths; to
 give them such a Notion of God's *Eterni-*
ty, not as may make them subtle Dispu-
 tants; but such as may influence their
 Lives and Conversations, and such as will
 make them more devout in God's Wor-
 ship, more willing and ready to obey his
 Commands; and therefore there is no Ne-
 cessity of canvassing that celebrated Quest-
 ion, whether the *Eternity* of God is a fixed
 or successive Duration, because the Scrip-
 tures give us no Light to determine this;
 but it will suffice us to retain this general
 Notion of it, that it is a Duration which
 never had any Beginning, nor ever will
 have any End. And this,

III. I SHALL endeavour to make out
 by Arguments, drawn from both Scrip-
 ture and Reason. Now this may be made
 evident from hence, because, in the Holy
 Scripture, he has the Title of *the everlast-* Gen. xxi.
ing God. There was none before him, nor^{33.}
shall be any after him. He has Pro-^{Isaiah}
 perties attributed to him which are eter-^{xliii. 10.}
 nal; as *eternal Power, eternal Glory,*^{Rom. i.}
^{20.}
^{1 Pet. v.}
 eter-^{10.}

SERM. *eternal Righteousness*, and the like ; and

V. here it will be worth our While to remark, that those Attributes which are essential to him, such as his Justice, his Holiness, his Power, are *eternal* in a true and proper Sense, since they are implied in his Existence, and are, indeed, God himself ; and therefore, if God's Power and Holiness are *eternal*, God himself must needs be so : But those Attributes which are relative, and have Respect to the Creature, such as God's Dominion, or God's Mercy ; these are only *eternal* in a limited Sense, and endure no longer, than God is pleased to exert them ; and therefore, no conclusive Argument can be drawn from them. I might easily heap up more Places of Scripture to prove God's *Eternity*, but these will suffice. I come, in the second Place, to prove this Truth from Reason, and that very briefly.

I. THE *Eternity* of God is evident, in that he is the first Cause of all Things, and therefore must be from all *Eternity* ; for, if he was not, either he received his Being from himself, or from some other ; not from himself, for then he would give that which was not in his Possession, and have a Power to act before he had any Being ; not from any other, for then he would

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would not be the first Cause of Things. SERM.
 From whence it evidently follows, that V.
 whatsoever was the first Cause of Things,
 had no Beginning, but did exist from all
Eternity. And it is as evident, that what
 had no Beginning, will have no End ; for
 that which had no Beginning must exist
 necessarily, Existence is essential to it ; and
 whatsoever doth exist necessarily, will do
 so to all *Eternity*. For, if it could lose
 its Being, it must be by its own Power,
 or the Power of some other ; not by its
 own Power, because necessary Existence
 is essential to the Being of the first Cause ;
 much less by the Power of any other, be-
 cause all other Beings derive their Power
 from this first Cause, and therefore must
 needs be less powerful : Hence, in Scrip-
 ture, God's Power is joined to his *Eter-* Rom. i.
nity, denoting to us this Truth, that that, 20.
 which is infinitely powerful, must be *eter-*
nal.

2. THAT God is an *eternal Being*, is
 plain from the first Notion which we have
 of a God, that he is a Being of all possible
 Perfection ; for a finite Duration is in-
 consistent with infinite Perfection. What-
 soever may cease to be, doth not include
 all possible Degrees of Perfection, because
 there is some Happiness and Perfection
 which

SERM. which it doth not absolutely and uncon-

V. troulably possess ; for whatsoever is limited or bounded, either as to its Extension or Duration, may be deprived of that Happiness, and those Perfections, which it might enjoy ; and therefore doth not comprehend all possible Perfection. As for Instance, God is the most blessed and happy Being ; and, as the Psalmist says, *He is blessed from everlasting to everlasting* : But, if it were possible for this Blessedness to cease, it would not then be perfect ; because the Perfection of this Blessedness doth consist in this, that, as it is infinite in its Intension, so it is *eternal* in its Duration. From whence we may reasonably conclude, that since God is a Being who contains all Perfections in himself, and since infinite Duration is one of them, therefore the Duration of God is infinite, or, which is the same in other Words, that God's Being is truly and properly *eternal*. I might enforce this Truth from Arguments drawn from the Consideration of the other Attributes of God, such as his Power and Immutability ; but, since these I have insisted upon are so plain and conclusive, I shall chuse rather to spend the Remainder of my Time, in shewing,

Psal. xli.
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IV. WHAT we may learn from the SERM.
Consideration of this Truth, that God is V.
eternal.

I. ~~Hence~~ we may learn, what great Reason we have to call to Mind our past Sins, and to blot them out, by a serious and hearty Repentance. For, though they are past with us, they are present with God; he records all our Thoughts, Words, and Actions, and will one Day call us to an Account for them. *A thousand Years* are (in this Sense) *with him, but as one Day*; he can bring to Light, and set in Order, all the Thoughts, Words, and Actions of our Lives, far more easily, than we can the Actions of one Day; for tho' God, in Scripture, is called *the Ancient of Days*, yet this Title is given him, not to denote any Change⁹ or Decay in God, but only to shadow forth his never-ending Duration; he is *the same Yesterday, to Day, and for ever*; and as no Thought of the Heart can escape his Knowledge, so neither will it slip out of his Memory. He will call us to an Account for *every idle Word* at the last Day. Matth. xii. 36. And therefore, God is said to *write a Book of Remembrance*, denoting to us, that God takes an exact Notice of all our Thoughts, Words,

SERM. Words, and Actions ; and that he doth it

V. for this End and Purpose, to call us to

Account hereafter for them ; he speaks after the Manner of Men, who use to write those Things in a Book, they shall have Occasion to call to Mind. How careful then ought we to be to call to Mind our former Sins and Transgressions, to recollect the Vanities of our Childhood, the Frailties of our Youth ; and to endeavour to blot them out of this Book, by a sincere and hearty Repentance, that so they may never rise up in Judgment against us ?

2. MUCH more ought we to be careful that we do not go on to offend God by our repeated Sins and Provocations ; that we do not add to the Number of them, and fill up the Measure of our Transgressions. The Consideration of God's incomprehensible Nature, and Divine Perfections, should strike an Awe upon our Minds, and restrain us from offending him. For alas ! how great Presumption is it, for poor, weak, frail Creatures, whose Duration is so short, and whose Lives are as nothing, in Comparison of God's, to lift up themselves against an *infinite* and *eternal Being* ; who, with one Breath of his Displeasure, can reduce them into nothing ;

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or into a Condition which is ten thousand Times worse than nothing? How vain and foolish a Thing is it, for Man to contend with his Maker; and for a dependent Being to incense that *eternal* God, from whose Bounty he receives every Moment of his Duration, and those Blessings which accompany it? Especially considering,

3. How great the Punishment will be of offending an *eternal* God. For though it doth not necessarily follow, that, because God is *eternal*, therefore the Wicked shall be punished to all *Eternity*: Yet we may make this lawful Conclusion, that, since God is *eternal*, he can make the Sinner miserable for ever; and, since he has declared that he will do so, we can have no Assurance that he will be more favourable, or that the Punishments of the Damned will have an End. Had God been a Being of finite Duration, we might have been assured, that his Anger would have had some Bounds and Limits, and that his Indignation could not have continued for ever; the Effect could endure no longer than its Cause; and the Punishment must cease, when the Inflicter of it was no longer in Being: It had then been some Mitigation of the Torments of those miserable

SERM. miserable Wretches, who are condemned to
 V. keep Company with the Devil and his
 Angels, to consider, that though their
 Torments were extremely intense, though
 the Misery they endured was beyond all
 Expression painful, yet there would come
 a Time when they should be freed from
 this Pain; and that, tho' they might be con-
 demned to these Torments for many Thou-
 sands and Millions of Years, yet, at last,
 the Times of Refreshing would come,
 when their Miseries would cease, and they
 should enjoy Ease and Rest; such a Con-
 sideration as this would, I say, some-
 what mitigate their Torments: But when
 a miserable Wretch shall consider, that the
 Punishments which he suffers are inflicted
 on him by an *eternal* God, who has de-
 nounced never-ending Torments against
 such as contemn his Authority, and violate
 his Laws; he must needs be filled with
 the utmost Horror and Despair imagina-
 ble, and his Condition must be miserable,
 beyond all that we can express or conceive.
 Instead, therefore, of flattering ourselves
 with deceitful Hopes that God will relax
 the Punishments of the impenitent Sinner,
 or shorten the Duration of them, let us
 reflect, that God, who is *eternal*, hath de-
 nounced *eternal* Torments; such Tor-
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ments as will bring on us more Pain, Anguish, and Misery, than all sensual Enjoyments in the World will make Amends for ; and that, if we go on in our Sins, we shall certainly lose the everlasting Joys of Heaven, and, by offending an infinite and eternal God, shall undergo such Punishments, whose Duration will bear an exact Proportion to the Rewards which He hath promised to those who obey his Laws.

4. THE Consideration of God's Eternity should engage us to put our Trust in him at all Times. For, since God is always the same, we may expect Relief from him at all Times, and in all our Necessities. All other Things are fading and changeable, and very often forsake us when we have most Need of them. Riches make themselves Wings and flee away ; Strength of Body will decay, and the Favour of Man, yea, even of Princes, is vain and deceitful ; but God is that Rock of Ages, upon whom we may surely build our Trust and Confidence ; he is a very ready Help in the Time of Trouble, and never forsook any Man who put his Trust in him. *My Days, says the Psalmist, are like a Shadow that declineth, and I am withered like Grass ; but thou, O Lord, shalt*

SERM. *shalt endure for ever, and thy Remembrance*

V: *unto all Generations ; and from hence he*

concludes, therefore thou shalt arise, and
 Psal. cii.
 12. *have Mercy upon Sion.*

5. HENCE we may learn to have a mean Opinion of the good Things of this World, which are fleeting and transitory, and of little Duration ; and to place our Happiness in the Enjoyment of God, who is everlasting. The good Things of this World are, indeed, the Gifts of our supreme Lord, and proceed from the Bounty of our munificent Benefactor ; and therefore they ought to be received with a ready Hand, and a joyful Heart, and employed to those Ends and Uses for which they were bestowed upon us. They are absolutely necessary to support our frail Bodies, and to make our Condition in this World easy and comfortable. It is therefore our Duty to take the innocent Enjoyment of them, and to proportion our Love and Esteem of them, according to that intrinsic Worth and Value which they contain : Since therefore the good Things of this World are of so short Continuance, and conduce only to our temporal Satisfaction, it ought to be our greatest Care to place our Affection on the most durable Object, and to make sure of our eternal

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The Eternity of God.

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nal Happiness hereafter; to *seek first the* SERM.
Kingdom of Heaven, and its *Righteousness*, V.

and then all other *Things* will be added

thereunto. The Enjoyment of the good
Things of this World is certainly a very
great Blessing, if a Man has an under-
standing Heart, to make a right Use of
them; and therefore *Godliness* has the *Pro-*
mise of the Life that now is, as well as of
that which is to come. But the Vision of

God, the Enjoyment of an *eternal Being*.

to all *Eternity*, is as much beyond the poor
and transitory Pleasures of this Life, as

Finite is from Infinite; and bears no more
Proportion to them, than a Drop of Wa-

ter doth to the vast Ocean, or a Dust
upon the Balance to the Universe. Was it

possible for a Man to comprehend those
Joys, which *neither Eye hath seen*, nor

Ear hath heard; could a Man have any
Notion of what it is to be happy for ever,

he would not be long in determining
which to chuse; the fading Enjoyments

of this Life, or a never ending Felicity.
Would but Men frequently retire into the

Closet of their own Breasts, and consider
with themselves, what those Rewards are

which are promised to such as obey the
Laws of God; what it is to be united to

an *eternal Being*, and to behold the Light
I of

SERM. of his Countenance to all *Eternity* ; such

V. Meditations, as these, would inflame our
 { Souls with an ardent Desire to partake of
 these Joys, which are *at God's right Hand*
for evermore ; and make us resolve with
St. Paul, that neither *Height nor Depth,*
nor Principalities, nor Powers, nor Things
present, nor Things to come, shall separate us
from the Love of God. How transporting
 a Contemplation must it needs be, to re-
 flect upon that State, where the Enjoy-
 ments of the Blessed shall be as fresh after
 many Ages, as they were at the first ;
 where their Affections shall be placed up-
 on such an Object, as shall furnish new
 Matter of Delight to all *Eternity* ? Such
 an Object is God, who is a continual
 Spring and Source of Content, Satisfaction,
 and Happiness ; who can administer such
 Delights, as alone can fill and satisfy the
 Soul ; and can and will prolong them to
 all *Eternity*.

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S E R M O N VI.

G O D is a Spirit.

J O H N iv. 24.

God is a Spirit, and they that worship him, must worship him in Spirit and in Truth.

F O R the better Understanding of SERM. VI. these Words, it is requisite to look into the Occasion of them, which was this : Our Saviour, going out of *Judea* into *Galilee*, passed through the Country of *Samaria*, and arrived at a City called *Sychar*, the Metropolis of those Parts, situated between the two Mountains *Gerizim* and *Ebal*; a Place which was very remarkable in the Sacred History, because of many Transactions which passed there : For we read, that, Gen. xii. when *Abram* came out of *Chaldæa*,^{6.} he passed through the Land unto the Place
I 2 of

SERM. of Sichem, unto the Plain of Moreh ; that

VI. here the *Israelites* laid the Bones of the

~~~~~ Patriarch *Joseph* ; this City *Jeroboam* fortified, and made it the Seat of his Kingdom, when the ten Tribes revolted from *Rehoboam*. Near this Place was *Jacob's Well*, where our Saviour, tired with his Journey, sat down, expecting that some Body should come to draw Water, that he might get some to quench his Thirst ; for,

John iv. 6. as we are told, *it was about the sixth Hour*, that is, according to our Computation, twelve o' Clock : The first that came,

ib. 7. was a Woman of Samaria, of whom our Saviour desires the Courtesy of a Draught of Water ; the Woman knowing him to be a Jew, either probably by his Habit or Manner of Speech, wonders at his Request, that he, who was a Jew, should either desire or expect any Kind of friendly Office from a Samaritan, between whom and the Jews there were the greatest Fews and Hatred imaginable ; insomuch that they did not maintain any civil Correspondence one with the other : And therefore she replies, How

ib. 9. is it that thou, being a Jew, askest Drink of me, who am a Woman of Samaria ? Our Saviour takes this Occasion to let her know, that, though he was a Jew, he

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he was none of the common Sort, both SERM.  
 by reprov<sup>ing</sup> her for Want of Charity, VI.  
 in refus<sup>ing</sup> him such a common Office  
 of Humanity, as the giving a Cup of  
 cold Water to one who thirsted, and  
 telling her, that he could have requited  
 her Kindness, by bestowing on her such  
*living Water*, of which whosoever drank, John iv.  
 should *never thirst* more; and, by telling<sup>10.</sup>  
 her several Things, which no Stranger  
 could know, who was not endowed with  
 the Spirit of Prophecy. The Woman,  
 from hence, being convinced, that our  
 Saviour was a Prophet, proposes to him  
 that Question which was controverted  
 with so much Warmth between the *Jews*  
 and *Samaritans*, which was the Place<sup>ib. 20.</sup>  
 where God's public Worship ought to  
 be performed, Mount *Sion*, or Mount  
*Gerizim*? In Answer to which our Sa-  
 viour hints to her, that *Jerusalem* was  
 the Place which God had set a-part to  
 be worshipped in, and that the *Sama-*  
*ritans* were guilty of Schism in separat-  
 ing themselves from the true Church of  
 God; and, finding her attentive to him,  
 and disposed to receive the Truth, he  
 goes on to instruct and inform her, that  
 the Time was now come, when the  
 Worship of God should no longer be

SERM. confined to a particular Place ; when God  
 VI. would no longer require of them the Ce-  
 remonies and Institutions of the *Mosaical*  
 Law, which were typical, but those holy  
 Desires and Affections of the Heart, which  
 were represented by them ; and he gives  
 this Reason for it, because *God is a Spi-*  
*rit*, and therefore such Worship, as is *spi-*  
*ritual*, must needs be most suitable and  
 best pleasing to him. *The Hour cometh,*  
*and now is, when the true Worshipers*  
*shall worship the Father in Spirit and in*  
*Truth ; for the Father seeketh such to*  
*worship him.* And then it follows, *God is*  
*a Spirit, and they that worship him, must*  
*worship him in Spirit and in Truth.* In  
 my Discourse upon these Words,

John iv.  
 23.

- I. I SHALL state the Notion of a *Spi-*  
*rit.*
- II. I SHALL shew how this Notion of a  
*Spirit* may be applied to God.
- III. I SHALL proceed to prove, that God  
is such a *Spirit* ; and then,
- IV. SHEW what Inferences do naturally  
arise from the Belief of this Truth.

I. I SHALL endeavour to give you the  
 best Account I can what a *Spirit* is.  
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Now the Knowledge of a *Spirit* is only attainable these two Ways, SERM.  
VI.

1. By abstracting and taking away those Properties which are essential to a Body, And,

2. By considering what Operations we find in the World, which exceed the Power of a material Being, and from hence forming our Conjectures of the Nature of that Principle from whence they proceed.

THE first Way of forming our Notions of a *Spirit*, is by abstracting or taking away those Properties, which are essential to a Body; and thus a *Spirit* is frequently described to be an immaterial Substance, or, which is the same Thing, a Being which has not any Extension of Parts; and thus our Saviour describes a Spirit, *A Spirit hath not Flesh and Bones*, Luke xxiv. 39. *as you see me have.*

THE second Way of framing a Notion of a *Spirit*, is to consider its Effects and Operations, and from hence to take our Apprehensions of that Being from whence they flow; for we find many Operations performed, which exceed the Power of any corporeal Agent, and therefore must proceed from a more powerful and refined Principle, and those are,

SERM.

I. VOLUNTARY Motion, or a Power  
 VI. of determining its own Motions where  
 and which Way it pleases; it is plain,  
 even by the Experience of our Senses,  
 that all Bodies move no otherwise than  
 they are moved by some external Agent,  
 and by those Impressions which are made  
 on them, from some other Principle;  
 but we find in ourselves not only a Prin-  
 ciple which moves the Body according  
 to its own Will, but which is also the  
 Lord and Master of its own Motions. It  
 is not absolutely guided by Representa-  
 tions taken in by the Senses, it doth not  
 always accord with those Impressions made  
 upon the Imagination, nay, it doth not  
 necessarily follow the last Dictates of the  
 Understanding; for, as *St. Paul* tells us,  
 Rom. vii. *What I hate, that do I*; and it was a  
 15. good Observation of a very ill Man, that,  
 as often as Reason is against a Man, so  
 often will the Man be against his Rea-  
 son.

2. THE second Property of a *Spirit*  
 is Activity of Motion. All bodily Agents  
 we know are limited to some determi-  
 nate Place; they can only be in one  
 Place at the same Time, and, by Con-  
 sequence, they can only move one Way;  
 but we find a Power within us, which  
 at

at the same Instant of Time can attend SERM.  
to many different Employments, and exert VI.  
its Operations in many different Places; {  
it can see in one Place, hear in another,  
and move in a third; and, at the same  
Time, can judge and reason within it-  
self.

3. A SPIRIT has a Power to reflect  
on its own Actions. The utmost Per-  
fection of a Body is Motion, this is all  
which can possibly result from the Fi-  
gure and Position of its Parts; but to  
compare the different Images of Things,  
to abstract from them, and to frame  
general Propositions; to compound them,  
and then to fit and judge on its own  
Composition, and reflect upon it; these  
are Operations which exceed the Power  
of any Agent purely material. Let a  
Man sit down and consider the Opera-  
tions which are performed within his own  
Mind; let him but reflect on the Actings  
of his own Soul, and these very Reflec-  
tions will teach him, that there is a Being  
within him, whose Actings are far more  
powerful than those which proceed from  
any material Agent; and therefore must  
be produced by a *spiritual* Being.

THE Sum of what I have said is this,  
that the Way to frame a Notion of a  
*spiri-*



SERM. *spiritual* Being is first to abstract from  
 VI. all those Properties which are essential  
 to a Body, and then to consider what  
 those Operations are, which transcend the  
 Power and Efficacy of all material Agents;  
 and hence we conclude, that a *Spirit* is  
 a Being not composed of Parts, nor cap-  
 able of being divided or circumscribed,  
 but is endowed with a Power of moving  
 itself, and reflecting on its own Motions:  
 I proceed to shew,

II. How this Notion of a *Spirit* may  
 be applied to God, or in what Sense God  
 may be said to be a *Spirit*. And,

I. GOD is therefore said to be a *Spi-rit*, because he is not composed of Parts, he has no bodily Substance, nor outward Frame or Shape, nor Figure, nor Colour, as Men have, but is wholly insensible and invisible. *Quem colimus Deum, nec ostendimus, nec videmus: Immo ex hoc Deum credimus, quod eum sentire possumus, videre non possumus*, says *Minutius Felix*. We cannot behold with our bodily Eyes the God whom we worship, neither can we shew him to others; but we believe that there is such a Being, who doth really exist, because we see the Workmanship of his Hands, we feel his Influence, we take Notice of such Effects wrought,

wrought, which cannot be performed by any material Being or any bodily Substance; and therefore we believe that there is an incorporeal Being, who performs these Operations. And tho' there are some Texts of Scripture which seem to denote to us, that God has Eyes, or Hands, or Feet, or Passions, and Affections, which depend upon the different Motion of the Blood and Animal Spirits, such as Anger, Compassion, Sorrow, and the like; yet these Places must not be understood in a literal Sense, but have a figurative and allegorical Meaning; and do denote to us, that God doth perform those Actions, by the Efficacy of his Divine Power, which Men perform, by the Members of their Body; and that such Effects are wrought by this Power of God, as we Men express by those Resentments of our Soul which we call Passions or Affections.

2. WHEN we say that *God is a Spirit*, we mean that this Description of a *Spirit* agrees to God by Way of Comparison; because this is the most sublime and perfect Notion that we can frame of any Being, therefore we apply it to God; and because we apprehend some Perfections to be in *spiritual* Beings, which surpass all those which Bodies are vested withal, therefore we

SERM. we make use of these Perfections, to de-

VI. scribe and shadow out to us the supreme  
 and most perfect Being; for, since God endowed our Souls with all those Perfections which dignify their Beings, we may be assured, that these Rays of the Divine Goodness were originally in God in their highest Splendor and Perfection; he must needs see, that made the Eye, and hear, that formed the Ear, and understand, that taught Man Knowledge; for if our Soul, which is but the faint Image or Transcript of some few of God's Perfections, is so noble and exalted a Being; how much more glorious must that Essence be, from whence it derived its Original: And therefore,

3. WHEN we say *God is a Spirit*, we must attribute to him those Perfections which belong to a *spiritual* Being, transcendently. God is, indeed, a *spiritual* Being, but his Perfections are exalted above, and infinitely surpass all such *spiritual* Natures as we are acquainted withal; and therefore, if we think to frame an adequate Notion of God, by the Contemplation of those Perfections, which we apprehend to be in other *spiritual* Beings, we shall but deceive ourselves, and become guilty of the most stupid Folly, and grof-

fest



fest Impiety. For, to know an infinite SERM.  
Being, an infinite Knowledge is required; VI.  
and therefore, after all our Disquisitions  
and Inquiries after the Nature of God, we  
must be content to fall as far short of  
comprehending his Being, as Finite doth  
of Infinite. Let a Man but consider how  
little he knows of the Nature and Operati-  
ons of his own Soul, of its Faculties, of  
its Union and Connection with the Body:  
How much more unknown to him the  
Nature of Angels is, and how uncertain  
his Conjectures are about them; and then  
he will find Reason to conclude, that his  
most refined and abstracted Ideas come in-  
finitely short, and are unworthy of that  
glorious Being, who inhabits Light inac-  
cessible. The Excellency of God's Na-  
ture is beyond all that we can express or  
conceive, which the *Jews* denoted, by  
making the Name of God ineffable; and  
therefore, though the Holy Scriptures have  
discovered to us the whole Council of God  
(at least so much as is absolutely necessary  
to our Salvation) yet the Nature of God  
still remains incomprehensible.

WHAT Discoveries will be made to us  
in a future Life, when our Faculties will  
be enlarged; and what is meant by that Vi-  
sion of God, which will be the Porti-  
on

SERM. on and Reward of the Blessed in Glory;

VI we must be content to be ignorant of till that Day, when Faith shall end in Vision, Hope in Enjoyment, and Grace be swallowed up in Glory. This we find true by daily Experience, that in this Life *we see only through a Glass darkly*; and it is a very probable Opinion, that there are many Attributes in God, which we are wholly unacquainted withal. 'Tis certain that the incomprehensible Nature of this *God of Spirits* infinitely transcends all that we can imagine or conceive, and therefore it becomes every one of us, to lay our Mouths in the Dust, lest we *utter what we understand not, and Things too wonderful for us which we know not*. For, as a noble Author observes, the Excellencies of the Divine Nature are so transcendent, that it might justly discourage us from offering so much as to celebrate them, if infinite Goodness was not one of them. Thus I have endeavoured to give you some Light, how that Notion, which we have of a *Spirit*, may be applied to God: I proceed to prove,

Job. xlii.  
3.

III. THAT God is such a *spiritual* Being as I have described to you, and,

I. 'Tis evident that *God is a Spirit*, because he is the most perfect Being. The  
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general Notion, which all Mankind retain SERM.  
VI.  
of a God, is, that he is a Being who com-  
prehends all possible Perfection; and, the

more perfect any Being is, the less Commerce it has with Matter. Now we see in this visible World, that God has given to his Creatures different Degrees of Perfection; he has placed them in different Ranks and Classes; so that, from the Contemplation of the meaner and more ignoble Parts of the Universe, we may be led, as it were, Step by Step, to acknowledge and adore that Fountain of Perfection, that Author of every good and perfect Gift from whence they derived their Original. The greatest Part of this visible World is a lumpish Mass, which remains unactive and immoveable, unless it receives an Impression from some external Agent. Some Parts of it are endowed with a Principle of Vegetation; others have Sense and Instinct allotted to them; to Man God has given Reason, he has placed a Power in him to perform such Actions as no meer bodily Agent can effect; he has furnished him with such Faculties, as render him capable of contemplating this visible World, governing inferior Beings, celebrating the Wisdom and Goodness of his great Creator, and rendering unto him Praise and Adoration.



SERM. Adoration. In the next Place, God is  
 VI. pleased to use the Ministry of Angels, a  
 Rank of Beings, who are freed from all  
 Incumbrance of Matter, and, by that  
 Means, more ready and more able to per-  
 form that Office allotted them by God,  
 of being *ministring Spirits*, and executing  
 God's Commands; that there are such Be-  
 ings, is evident, not only from Divine Re-  
 velation, but from Natural Reason itself;  
 because all Histories furnish us with In-  
 stances of such Effects wrought by some  
 invisible Beings, as surpass the Power of  
 any Man to perform. Now since 'tis  
 evident, that all these several Ranks of Be-  
 ings have more or less of Power, Efficacy,  
 and Perfection, according as they are  
 more or less immersed in Matter, we may  
 thence reasonably conclude, that the Essence  
 of that Being, from whence all these Per-  
 fections are derived is purely *spiritual*; and that  
 those Creatures most resemble him, and are  
 the fittest Representations of his Divine Na-  
 ture, which are endowed with the highest  
 Degrees of Perfection. Since therefore the  
 most exalted, the most noble, the most  
 perfect Being that we can conceive, is  
 such a Being as is incorporeal, such a Being  
 as is endowed with the utmost Extent of  
 Knowledge and Power; it naturally fol-  
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lows, that the most suitable Conceptions SERM.  
we can frame of God are, that he is a VI.  
Being, who is the Source and Fountain of  
these Perfections, the *Father of Spirits*, and  
therefore that he must needs be *spiritual*.

2. WE may argue from those Excel-  
lencies which constitute the Divine Na-  
ture, those incommunicable Properties  
which are included in the Notion of  
God; such as are these, that God is an in-  
finite, unchangeable, and omnipresent Be-  
ing. For whatsoever is material, must be  
finite; it must have some Bounds, and be  
confined to some limited Space; 'tis di-  
visible into Parts, and therefore continu-  
ally undergoes some Change or other; it  
can act only within its own proper Sphere,  
and its Influence reaches no farther, than  
it can transmit its more active Parts. But  
God is present in all Places, and yet is  
contained by none, *the Heaven of Heavens* 2 Chron.  
*cannot contain him.* He is subject to no ii. 6.  
Alteration or Change; in him there is no  
*Variableness, neither Shadow of Turning,*  
and therefore he must needs be a *spiritual*  
Being.

3. THIs may be proved from the Consi-  
deration of those Works of Wonder, which

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he

SERM. he has produced : *The Heavens declare the*

VI. *Glory of God, and the Firmament sheweth*

*Pfal. xix.*  
1.

*his handy Work.* Whoever considers the admirable Wisdom by which this World was contrived, with what exquisite Skill every Part of it is formed, with what curious and inimitable Workmanship the least Insect is framed, must needs conclude that it could never be the Effect of any material Agent. For, since the Cause must be more noble than the Effect, it will necessarily follow, that such Effects of Wisdom, Goodness, and Power, must needs proceed from a *spiritual* Agent. I now hasten to consider,

IV. *and Lastly*, what Inferences naturally arise from the Belief of this Truth, That *God is a Spirit* ; and,

I. FROM hence we may infer, that it is unreasonable to make any visible Representation of God. For since the Nature of God is *spiritual*, since he is not the Object of our Sight, therefore our Imaginations cannot frame any Thing like him ; much less can he be represented by any bodily Shape. For all our Images of Things come in by the Senses, our Imaginations work upon those Ideas of corporeal Things administered from without ; and therefore 'tis impossible to

frame



frame an Image or Picture of such a Being, SERM.  
or to paint it in our Fancies, which is not VI.  
the Object of Sense. How ridiculous would  
that Limner appear, who should endeavour  
to paint a Sound, or to carve the Image  
of an Eccho? What Colours would he  
make use of to represent the Soul of Man,  
or to express that Part of us which most  
resembles God? And, if this would be  
so foolish an Attempt, it must needs be  
much more so, to make an Image of God  
himself, or to delineate that Being, whose  
Excellencies and Perfections infinitely ex-  
cel the Soul of Man. God's Nature is so  
far exalted above all that we can conceive  
or think, that 'tis an Instance of his won-  
derful Goodness and Condescension, that  
he is pleased to make any Discovery of  
himself unto us, or to permit us to frame  
any Conceptions of his Being and Attri-  
butes; but to make any Image of God, to  
express him by any bodily Shape, derogates  
so much from the Dignity of his Nature,  
that even natural Reason will convince us,  
both of its Folly and Impiety; and there-  
fore, even many of the Heathens them-  
selves, who had corrupted their natural  
Notions of God, and whose Reason was  
blinded by a superstitious and idolatrous  
Worship, had yet Light sufficient remain-

SERM. ing, to condemn this Practice. *Pytha-*

VI. *goras* forbad his Scholars to engrave any Shape of God: And the Ancient *Romans* (we are told) for 170 Years after the Building of their City, never worshipped their Gods by any material Representation: So that we may justly wonder, that this should be practised by the modern *Romanists*, who, tho' they live in Times of greater Light, have yet transcribed this, as well as many other of the erroneous Practices of their Heathenish Ancestors.

2. THE Belief, that *God is a Spirit*, should teach us to entertain suitable Notions of God. It is impossible, indeed, for us to frame a full and adequate Notion of a *Spirit*; in this Life our Knowledge depends so much upon our external Senses, that what is not gross enough to be seen, is with very great Difficulty comprehended; and if we are so much in the Dark as to *spiritual* Beings in general; if the Nature of Angels, and our own Souls, surpasses our Knowledge, how much more must the Knowledge of the Divine Nature be incomprehensible, whose glorious Excellencies and Perfections infinitely transcend those which we apprehend in created *Spirits*; and yet, tho' our Conceptions of the Divine Nature are vastly disproportion-

portionable to their Object; tho' we cannot think of God as we ought to do; yet this will not excuse us from framing the best Ideas of him which we can; and, whenever we contemplate his incomprehensible Essence, to do it with the most profound Adoration and Veneration imaginable. Tho' we cannot comprehend God in our finite Understandings, yet we must endeavour, as much as possibly we can, to glorify him with our *Spirits*, and to suit our Notions to those Discoveries he has been pleased to make of himself to Mankind. We shall be inexcusable, if, whilst we acknowledge him to be a *spiritual* Being, whose Perfections are infinite, we represent him in our Minds under any corporeal Form, and fancy God to be such a one as ourselves; if we cloath him with any of those Passions and Affections which we frail Creatures are subject to, or attribute to him any Thing which implies Imperfection. 'Tis true, our most exalted Notions of God will be unworthy of him, and, when we have done what we can to spiritualise our Conceptions, our Fancies will be filled with corporeal Images, and something of Sense will interpose itself in our most abstracted Notions; and therefore, whatsoever Conception of God comes

SERM.  
VI.



SERM. into our Minds, we must humbly acknow-

VI. ledge that it is unworthy of him, and  
 { that he is above all that we conceive  
 and think; we must acknowledge the  
 Frailty of our Faculties, and the Infirmit-  
 ty of our own Minds, and beseech God to  
 enlighten our Understandings, and to teach  
 us the Knowledge of himself.

3. If *God is a Spirit*, then we may  
 infer from hence, that the Perfection of  
 our Nature chiefly consists in the moral  
 Endowments of our Soul; for, since we  
 most resemble God in that Part of us,  
 which is *spiritual*, therefore, the more we  
 cultivate our Souls, the better they are  
 furnished with heavenly Graces, the nearer  
 they approach to that State of Perfecti-  
 on, in which our Blessedness doth consist;  
 and since Wisdom, Holiness, Power,  
 and Goodness are those Divine Attributes,  
 which are originally in God, and which  
 render the Divine Nature infinitely more  
 excellent than any created *Spirit*; there-  
 fore, the more our Souls partake of these  
 Divine Perfections, the more wise, and  
 holy, and just, and good we are, the  
 more conformable are we to our Heav-  
 enly Original, in which the Perfection of  
 our Nature doth consist.

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4. HENCE we may learn to expect SERM. with Confidence all those *spiritual* Gifts VI. which God has promised us in his Holy Word; we may be assured, that he is both willing and able to protect us in a Time of Danger, to support us in a Time of Affliction and Distress, to strengthen us in a Time of Trial and Temptation, and that, in all our Needs and Calamities, his Grace will be sufficient for us, for, the more *spiritual* any Being is, the more wise and powerful it is; and, since God is pleased to stile himself the *Father of Spirits*, we may be assured that he compassionately seeks the Welfare of his Off-spring, and yearns with Bowels of Love and good Will towards them.

5. HENCE we may collect, that Man's chief Happiness, in another Life, will consist in the Vision of God, and a closer Union to the Divine Nature; for, since all Content and Satisfaction flows from a Likeness and Suitableness of Nature, nothing can afford so much Pleasure to the Soul as the Knowledge of God and the Contemplation of his wonderful Excellencies. In this Life, we only behold him through a Glass darkly; he is pleased to discover to us his back Parts, and to demonstrate his Being by the Works

SERM. of his Creation and Providence ; but, in  
 VI. the Life to come, we shall see him Face  
 to Face ; *God will lift up the Light of  
 his Countenance upon us* ; he will enlighten our Understandings, and give us clearer Notions of his Being and Essence, his glorious Attributes and Divine Excellencies ; nay, perhaps he will discover to us many Perfections which we were wholly unacquainted withal before. He will fill us with as much Light and Knowledge as our finite Capacities are capable of comprehending ; nay, he will enlarge our Faculties, and fit and prepare them for those glorious Discoveries which he will make of himself to us, and our Souls will be borne up upon the Wings of Knowledge and Love ; for, the longer we contemplate his Divine Excellencies, the more we shall discover of them, and, the more we know of them, the more earnestly shall we desire to be united to them, and the more affectionate will our Praises and Adorations be : These are Employments suitable to our *spiritual* Parts ; these are Joys agreeable to our Souls, which alone can afford them Content and Satisfaction. Even in this Life, when we only know in Part, how pleasing and delightful an Em-

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Employment is it to contemplate the SERM.  
Works of Nature, to consider the Rea- VI.  
sons and Causes of Things, and to be-  
hold the wonderful Wisdom of God in  
the Contrivance of this World ; and if  
so, how transporting a Pleasure must it  
needs be, how surpassing all that we now  
can think or conceive, when not only  
the Knowledge of natural Things shall  
be discovered to us, but the God of  
Nature shall display his Excellencies be-  
fore our Sight ; when we shall behold  
him, who is now invisible, because he  
is only *spiritually* to be discerned ?

6. *and Lastly*, If *God is a Spirit*, then  
we ought to worship him in *Spirit and*  
*in Truth*, i. e. we must not worship God  
with a false Worship as the *Samaritans*  
did on Mount *Gerizim* ; but our Wor-  
ship must be true, such as God has en-  
joined, and performed after such a Man-  
ner as God has appointed. Our Wor-  
ship also must be *spiritual*, it must not  
consist chiefly in outward Ceremonies, or  
in the external Solemnities, as the *Jewish*  
Worship did, but in the suitable Dispo-  
sitions and Affections of the Soul. Our  
Obligation to such a Worship as this  
will naturally follow from the Principle,  
that *God is a Spirit*, for this Excellency  
of

SERM. of God's Nature is the original Founda-

VI. tion of God's Worship ; we therefore

worship him, because he is worthy of, and claims a Right to all the Services we can perform. Worship is nothing but the giving God that Honour which is due unto him, adoring his infinite Perfections, and acknowledging him for the great Creator and Benefactor of Mankind. Now he that would do this aright must consider, what those glorious Perfections are which he ought to acknowledge, must be sensible of that infinite Distance, which is between the Creature and the Creator ; both which Considerations will teach him, that, *since God is a Spirit, we ought to worship him in Spirit and in Truth* ; for, since the best of our Services are infinitely below the Worth and Dignity of that God to whom we perform them ; therefore we must be sure to offer up to him the best and most worthy Present which we have, and endeavour to make such an Offering as is suitable to his Nature, though infinitely disproportionate to the Worth of our Benefactor. Since we acknowledge God to be a *spiritual* Being, who is present in all Places, and knows all our Thoughts ; it is therefore our Duty to compose our  
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Spirits to a reverential Fear of his Majesty, to fill our Souls with awful Thoughts of his Perfections, and to conform our Wills to his Divine Will. The Worship of our Bodies is, indeed, required of us; because this will be very serviceable to raise up devout Thoughts in our Souls, to put us in Mind of the Duty we are about, and to fix our Thoughts on the Object of our Addresses; and because God created our Bodies as well as our Souls, and therefore may reasonably expect that we should yield him the Homage of them: But the Worship of our Souls is that which he has chiefly a Respect to, without which, whoever performs the external Solemnities of Religion, offers up a noisome Carcass instead of an acceptable Oblation; his Sacrifice wants a Heart, which was always accounted ominous under the *Jewish* Dispensation, and is as abominable in the Sight of God, as if he cut off a Dog's Neck, in the Words of the Prophet; for *God is a Spirit*, that is, a Being which has Knowledge and Power; he is a *Spirit* infinitely perfect, and therefore is omniscient, omnipotent, and omnipresent; all which Perfections call for our most humble and devout Adorations, and require that our  
Worship



SERM. Worship be performed in *Spirit* and in

VI. *Truth.* How vain and foolish a Thing

is it for us, to fancy that we can please God with a Worship of our own Invention; that he is delighted with Shows and Appearances, with the gaudy Outside of Religion; that his Anger will be appeased with the Blood of Bulls and Goats, or his Favour gained with a fawning and hypocritical Service, the bare Performance of the external Duties of Religion? No, let us not deceive ourselves; God has told the *Jews* long ago, that these are not acceptable unto him, Bring

Isai. i. 13. *no more vain Oblations, Incense is an Abomination unto me, the New-moons and Sabbaths, the Calling of Assemblies I cannot away with, it is Iniquity, even the solemn Meeting.* The most solemn Worship of God is not acceptable unto God, unless the Spirit and Soul go along with it; for God is an omniscient *Spirit*, he knows all the Thoughts of our Hearts, he sees all the Desires and Affections of our Souls, and takes Notice of all our Wanderings in his Service; so that we do but deceive ourselves if we pretend to worship him, whilst at the same Time *our Hearts go after our Covetousness*, and our Thoughts are employed about our worldly

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worldly Concerns. He is an omnipresent **SERM.**  
*Spirit*, and can hear our Prayers at all **VI.**  
Times, and in all Places: He is an om-  
nipotent *Spirit*, and can supply all our  
Wants: Which Perfections should teach  
us to approach the Throne of Grace with  
Confidence and Assurance, that he will  
make good all his Promises unto us. *Let*  
*me therefore beseech you, Brethren, that*  
*ye present not only your Bodies, but your*  
*Souls also, a living Sacrifice, holy, accept-*  
*able unto God, which is your reasonable*  
*Service: And be not conformed unto this*  
*World, but be transformed by the Renew-*  
*ing of your Minds, that ye may prove*  
*what is that good, and acceptable, and per-*  
*fect Will of God: Which that we may*  
always do, God of his Mercy grant for  
*Jesus Christ his Sake.*

S E R M O N

## S E R M O N VII.

## The Omnipresence of GOD.

PSALM CXXXIX. 7.

*Whither shall I go from thy Spirit?  
Or whither shall I flee from thy  
Presence?*

SERM.  
VII.

**T**HIS Psalm was probably composed by *David*, when he lay under *Saul's* Displeasure, when the Calumnies and malicious Accusations of *Doeg* and other Court-Parasites had so far gained the Ascendant over *Saul*, that he looked upon *David* as one who was disaffected to his Government, one who fomented Divisions and Diffensions amongst his Subjects, and aspired to the Crown of *Israel*.

THESE



THESE false Accusations and ill-ground- SERM.  
ed Jealousies were far more grievous to VII.  
*David* than all the Troubles he under-  
went, during his Banishment, because his  
Integrity was called in Question, which of  
all Things in the World he endeavoured  
to hold fast ; and because he was not  
only slandered for being a Rebel against  
his Prince, but also accused of being a  
Hypocrite towards God ; so that not on-  
ly his own private Interest, but the pu-  
blic Interest of Religion suffered, and  
wicked and prophane Persons took Oc-  
casion from hence to blaspheme the Holy  
Name of God, *For they speak against* Ps.cxxxix.  
*thee wickedly, and thine Enemies take thy* 20.  
*Name in vain.*

AND therefore *David*, in several of  
his Psalms, and particularly in this one  
hundred and thirty-ninth Psalm professes  
his Innocence, and appeals to God, who  
discerns the most hidden Thoughts and  
Intentions of the Heart, and cites his Ad-  
versaries to appear before God's Tribunal,  
to answer those false and malicious Ac-  
cusations, which they had made against  
him, and beseeches God to judge and re-  
venge his Cause.

To vindicate himself, as much as pos-  
sible he could, from those false Impu-  
tations,

SERM. tations, he pens this Psalm, which he delivered to the Master of Music, to be a lasting Testimony of his Sincerity, and a seasonable Admonition to all those who harbour any villainous and treasonable Designs, to lay them aside, and to forbear putting them into Practice.

THE Argument he makes Use of, is all along taken from the Consideration of God's *Omniscience* and *Omnipresence*, that God knows all the Thoughts and Intents of our Heart, even those *Thoughts which are afar off*; those *Thoughts* which are not yet conceived in our Minds; he knows all our *Words* before they are uttered with the *Tongue*; he can tell us what we have done, and what we are about to do, and what we shall do to the End of our Lives.

ib. 5.

ib. 6.

BUT how God can do this, from whence, or from what Principles, he deduces his *Knowledge*, this, he confesses, is *too wonderful for him, it was too high, he could not attain unto it*; but yet, he expresses his Certainty of the Thing, and concludes, that, since God knows all Things, that therefore he must be present in all Places, and that all the Endeavours of the Sinner to elude his Vengeance are to no Purpose: *Whither shall*

I go

*The Omnipresence of God.*

145

*go from thy Spirit? Or whither shall I flee from thy Presence? If I ascend up into Heaven, thou art there; if I make my* SERM. VII.

*Bed in Hell, behold, thou art there.* As if he had said, I am indeed fled from the Presence of *Saul*, I have escaped those snares which he had laid for my Life, and am secure from his Displeasure; my Innocence has been to me a brazen Wall, and I live securely under the Protection of the Almighty; but, if I had made God my Enemy, or committed any of those sins my Adversaries charge me withal, I know there had been no Way of fleeing from his Vengeance, or escaping the Punishment of my Sins; those Places, which conceal me from my offended Prince, are all open to God's all-seeing Eye, and full of his Divine Presence.

*Whither shall I go from thy Spirit? Or whither shall I flee from thy Presence?*

The Question implies the Negative, and denotes to us this plain and useful Truth, That God is *present* in all Places, his Being is diffused through the whole World, and that therefore it is impossible to conceal ourselves from his all-seeing Eye.

L

AND



SERM. AND, that I may render this Truth more  
 VII. useful and instructive, I shall endeavour to  
 shew,

I. WHAT we mean, when we say that  
*God is omnipresent.*

II. I SHALL make Proof of this Article of  
 our Faith.

III. I SHALL consider what Influence  
 the Belief of this Attribute of God  
 ought to have on our Lives and Con-  
 versations. And,

I. I SHALL consider what we mean,  
 when we say that *God is omnipresent.*

THE Omnipresence of God is an Article  
 of our Faith, which, we confess, is in-  
 comprehensible; God's Essence is infinite,  
 and cannot be comprehended in our finite  
 Understandings, and therefore we ought,  
 every one of us, to say with the *Psalmist*,  
 Pf. cxlv. 3. *Great is the Lord, and greatly to be prais-*  
*ed; and his Greatness is unsearchable.*

YET, though we cannot comprehend  
 the Omnipresence of God, or positively de-  
 fine wherein it consists, or frame an ade-  
 quate Notion of it; yet, if we profess  
 our Belief of it, we must frame some  
 Notion or other of it, though very im-  
 perfect; and it is our Duty to endeavour  
 to

to obtain as plain and intelligible a No-SERM.  
tion of it, as the abstruse Nature of the VII.  
Subject is capable of. We ought to con-  
sider what Light God has afforded us  
from the Principles of Reason, and what  
Revelation he has made of this Divine At-  
tribute in the Holy Scriptures.

If we seriously contemplate this Mat-  
ter, we shall find, that the Holy Scrip-  
tures make Mention of a two-fold *Pre-  
sence of God*, the one *general*, the other  
more *particular*.

By the *particular Presence of God* we  
are to understand, those extraordinary Ma-  
nifestations which God is pleased to make  
of himself to some Persons, in some Places,  
and at some particular Times and Seasons.  
Thus God was *present* with *Moses* in the  
Bush, with the People of *Israel* in the  
Cloud; thus he is *present* in Heaven by  
the Manifestations of his Glory; in his  
Church, and in the Heart of every good  
and pious Christian, by the Gifts and Gra-  
ces of his Holy Spirit.

THIS is not that *Presence of God* de-  
scribed to us in the Text, because it is  
limited and bounded to particular Ob-  
jects, and, by Consequence, finite, and is  
only the Effect of that *general and essen-  
tial Presence of God*, which equally exists

SERM. in all Places, and is communicated to all  
VII. Things. And this is three-fold :

1. *GOD is present* in all Places, and with all Things, by his Knowledge ; he knows whatsoever is done in the World, he beholds every Thing, though transacted in the farthest Parts of the Earth, or in the closest Retirements ; nay, he *is a Discerner of the hidden Thoughts and Intents of the Heart ; neither is there any Creature that is not manifest in his Sight : But all Things are naked and opened to the Eyes of him, with whom we have to do.*

Heb. iv.  
12, 13.

2. *GOD is omnipresent* by his Power and Operation ; he, who at first created all Things, still preserves and upholds them, rules and governs them, and manages them all as best secures the Ends of his Government, and brings about the wise Designs of his over-ruling Providence ; it is *in him we live, and move, and have our Being.*

Acts xvii.  
28.

3. *GOD is omnipresent essentially*, his Being is diffused through the Universe, and though he is not circumscribed and limited by any determinate Place, as all created Beings are, yet there is no Place in which he is not. The Manner, how he is thus *present*, cannot be comprehend-  
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ed by our limited Conceptions ; and, SERM.  
though we could comprehend it, yet we VII.  
should want Words to express it by. 

II. AND therefore I proceed, *Secondly*, to make Proof of this Article of our Faith ; and this I might easily perform by producing what both *Jews* and *Heathens*, the antient Philosophers and our modern Reasoners, have said on this Subject ; but I shall rather apply my Thoughts to what I find revealed in the Holy Scriptures, as containing Arguments suitable to all Capacities, which being seriously considered, and frequently thought on, will make every one wise unto Salvation. And,

I. I SHALL begin with the Words immediately following the Text, in which the *Psalmist* gives an Answer to the Question proposed, *Whither shall I go from thy Spirit ? Or whither shall I flee from thy Presence ?* And then he reckons up all the Places which a vain and wicked Man can fancy to himself, to be a secure Retreat from the Anger of God, Heaven, Earth, the Sea, and even Hell itself ; and yet after all he concludes, that God is *present* in all those Places, and that there is no Possibility of concealing ourselves from his all-seeing Eye : *If I ascend up*  
L 3 *into*

SERM. *into Heaven, thou art there; if I make my*  
 VII. *Bed in Hell, behold, thou art there; if I take*  
 { *the Wings of the Morning, and dwell in*  
*the uttermost Parts of the Sea, even there*  
*shall thy Hand lead me, and thy right Hand*  
*shall hold me.* And that, by this Presence  
 of God in all these Places, is meant God's  
*essential Presence*, and not his Presence by  
 his Power and Knowledge, is plain, be-  
 cause these Words are brought in by the  
*Psalmist*, as an Argument to prove that  
 Ver. 2. Proposition, that God knows the Heart of  
 Man, and *understands* their *Thoughts afar*  
*off*; and this he proves, because God is  
*present* in all Places, and must needs see  
 and take Notice of them.

Ch. lxvi.  
1.

IN like Manner, in the Prophet *Isaiah*,  
 we find God himself thus arguing: *Thus*  
*saith the Lord, The Heaven is my Throne,*  
*and the Earth is my Foot-stool*; and there-  
 fore he demands, in the Verses immedi-  
 ately following, *Where is the House that ye*  
*build unto me?* and *Where is the Place of*  
*my Rest?* As if he should have said, That  
 it was a vain and foolish Thing for the  
*Jews* to imagine that God's Being was  
 confined to that Temple which they had  
 built, or that, because they were the pecu-  
 liar People of God, therefore God had took  
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up his Abode amongst them, and was on- SERM.  
ly *essentially present* in the House which VII.  
they had built for him: Because, as he  
there argues, his Essence is diffused thro'  
the Universe, the *Heaven* is *his Throne*,  
and the *Earth* his *Footstool*; he is above  
the one, and tramples the other under his  
Feet; *for*, as he pursues his Argument, *all* Ver. 2.  
*those Things bath my Hand made*. God  
was the great Architect and Creator of this  
World, and all that therein is, and, there-  
fore, had a Being long before it was created,  
and by Consequence could not be confin-  
ed to any determinate Space.

To both which we may add, what Jer. xxiii.  
the *Prophet* tells us plainly, that no Man <sup>24.</sup>  
can *bide himself* from God's *Presence*, be-  
cause God *fills Heaven and Earth*. And <sup>1 Kings</sup>  
that *the Heaven of Heavens cannot contain* <sup>viii. 27.</sup>  
*him*. All which Places serve to teach us,  
that God's Essence is infinitely diffused  
thro' the whole World, no Place is void of  
his *Presence*, there is not the least Mote  
or Atom in which God doth not exist;  
and tho' we cannot understand the Man-  
ner how God is thus *omnipresent*, and there  
may be many Objections raised which we  
cannot answer; yet this should not make  
our Faith stagger, because we have no  
Reason to expect that our weak and finite



SERM. Capacities should comprehend the Being  
VII. of an infinite God.

AND, methinks, when we consider how little true Knowledge we are Masters of, how ignorant we are in those Things we are constantly conversant about, and how great Strangers we are to ourselves, to our own Make, and Frame, and the Operations of our own Souls; we should find no Cause to wonder, that Things so remote should be hid from us, and that we cannot fathom the Being of an infinite God; since no wise Man would own such a God as could be comprehended by us. And therefore I shall proceed,

III. *and Lastly*, To consider of what Use the Belief of this Truth may be, for the Government of our Lives and Conversations. And,

I. THE Belief, that God is *present* in all Places, should teach us to walk circumspectly, to be careful of all our Thoughts, Words, and Actions, and to behave ourselves after such a Manner, as becomes Persons who believe that they live under the Eye of an all-seeing God, who takes Notice of all their Doings, and will certainly call them to an Account for them, and either reward or punish them at the Last Day.

FOR

## The Omnipresence of God.

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FOR how warily and circumspectly do SERM.  
we behave ourselves, when we are in the VII.

View of those whom we reverence, either for their Wisdom, Gravity, or Authority over us? How careful are we when we approach the Throne or Presence of our Prince, that we do not utter one unseemly Word, that we are not guilty of any unbecoming Action or Gesture? And so, how much more careful ought we to be to walk uprightly, to restrain our Tongue as it were with a Bridle, and to cast out of our Minds all wicked and unclean Thoughts, all carnal Desires and Affections; when we consider that the great God of Heaven and Earth looks down upon us? For, as the *Psalmist* speaks,  
*The Lord looketh from Heaven; he beboldeth all the Sons of Men: From the Place of his Habitation he looketh upon all the Inhabitants of the Earth: He fashioneth their Hearts alike; he considereth all their Works.* Ps xxxiii. 13, 14, 15.

2. How much more watchful ought we to be, that we do not fall into any Sin? Not only the more open and grosser Acts of Debauchery, but also those Sins which Men affect to commit with the greatest Privacy imaginable. For let us consider, that, tho' we should escape the Eye of Men, yet we cannot conceal ourselves

SERM. selves from the Sight of an all-seeing God,

VII. who will not be mocked; but will, one

Time or other, bring to Light all wicked Deeds, and expose them to the View of Men and Angels.

AND how shall we be amazed and confounded at that great and terrible Day, when all the Secrets of Men's Hearts shall be laid open and revealed; when those Sins, which we have committed with so much Privacy, shall be published openly, and writ in such legible Characters, that the whole World may read them?

SAY not therefore of any Sin, *Doth God see it, or is there any Knowledge in the most High?* For God is *Light*, and in him *there is no Darkness at all. The Darkness and the Light are both alike to him, he pierces even to the Dividing asunder of the Joints and the Marrow, and stiles himself a Discerner of the Thoughts and Intents of the Heart.*

3. THE Meditation on this Divine Attribute of God's *Omniscience* and *Omnipresence*, will afford us Grounds of Comfort and Support, under all the Afflictions and Calamities of this Life, whether temporal or spiritual.

FOR if we make God our Refuge, and take him for our Shield, if by a good and holy



holy Life we put ourselves under his Protection, he will be a very ready Help unto us in Time of Trouble, and we shall have no Reason to be afraid, though the Earth be removed, and the Mountains be carried into the Midst of the Sea.

SERM.  
VII.

FOR God is present in all Places, and at all Times, and has promised that he will keep him in perfect Peace, whose Mind is stayed on him.

WHEN all other Helps fail, when not only our Strength, our Riches, and our Friends fail us, but even when our Father and our Mother forsake us, then our God will take us up. For the Eyes of the Lord run to and fro, through the whole Earth, to shew himself strong in Behalf of them, whose Heart is perfect towards him.

4. A SERIOUS Reflection on this Truth, that God is *omnipresent*, will enable us to offer up our Prayers and Praises unto him, with Affiance and Devotion.

FOR, was God limited to any certain Place, we could not be assured that he heard our Prayers, or gave Ear to our Requests; he might be employed about other Affairs, and, tho' with the Worshipers of *Baal* we cried never so loud, yet we could have no Assurance that our Addresses reached his Ears; but when we are

con-

SERM. convinced that God is every where, that

VII. his *Presence* pierces into the lowest Dungeon, as well as shines upon the highest Hill, this will enable us to approach with Confidence to the Throne of Grace, and offer up our Petitions to him without Doubting; for God stiles himself a God *bearing Prayers*, unto whom *all Flesh* may come; his Ears are always open to the Complaints of the Poor and Miserable, and 'tis his Will, that in all Places *holy Hands* should be *lift up*.

THE Consideration of God's *Omnipresence* would also enliven our Devotions, and engage us to address ourselves to him with becoming Gestures of Body, and suitable Affections of Soul.

FOR, tho' God is *present* in all Places, yet he, in a more particular Manner, dwells and resides in that House which he has chosen to set his Name in; and therefore he expects that we should not only keep his Sabbaths, but reverence his Sanctuary.

LET me therefore beseech you, to bring along with you unto this Place such holy Frames of Spirit, to deck and adorn your Souls with such fervent Desires and Affections, and to behave yourselves after such a reverential and devout Manner, as Becomes Men who approach the *Presence* of

*The Omnipresence of God.*

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of the great King of Heaven and Earth; SERM.  
for God is in a more particular Manner VII.  
*present* with us in this Place, though we  
know it not; and, where *two or three are*  
*gathered together* to worship him after his  
Will, he will be *in the Midst of them*.

LET us therefore worship and adore  
him; let us with Hands and Hearts lift up  
to him, beseech him, that he will im-  
print such an Awe of his Divine *Presence*  
on our Minds, that, for the Future, we  
may not dare wilfully and presumptuous-  
ly to offend him.

S E R M O N



## S E R M O N VIII.

Of PROVIDENCE. Of Lots and  
Games of Chance.

PROV. xvi. 33.

*The Lot is cast into the Lap ; but the  
whole Disposing thereof is of the  
Lord.*

SERM.  
VIII.

**T**H E Design of the *Wise Man*,  
in these Words, is to shew that  
the Government of this World  
is not left to Chance and For-  
tune, but that there is a wise and power-  
ful Being, who superintends human Af-  
fairs, and orders and manages all Things  
with a steady Hand ; so that the most tri-  
vial Matters, those Things which we think  
of least Consequence, are disposed of by  
his Guidance and Direction : *The Lot is  
cast into the Lap ; but the whole Disposing  
thereof is of the Lord.*

THE

THE Generality of Mankind are willing to confess, that this visible Frame was the wise Contrivance of some skilful Artificer; but they are not so universally agreed concerning the Government of it: For many (and those of the first Rank amongst the Masters of Reason, who have made it their Business to enquire into the Nature of Things) are apt to conclude, that when once God had set it into Order, and linked together the Chain of second Causes, he took no farther Care of it; and, they thought, that herein the Wisdom of God did consist, in disposing this great and curious Machine after such a Manner, that it should move on in a regular and uninterrupted Order, without the least Jar or Disturbance; rather than in a continual Attendance on its Motions, and a *providential* Disposition of every particular Accident relating to it.

BUT, if we consult the Holy Scriptures, we shall find a far different Account of Things; God is there described like a careful and indulgent Parent, providing for all his Offspring, but more particularly indulgent to his most dutiful and obedient Children; consulting their Advantage, and ordering and disposing of all Things after such a Manner, as may best suit with their

SERM.  
VIII.

SERM. their several Necessities, and promote their

VIII. truest Interest; he is with them at their

Going out and Coming in, he sets his Angels to keep Watch and Guard over them; he numbers the Hairs of their Heads, and suffers not one of them to fall to the Ground, without his good Pleasure; he writes their Words, and their very Thoughts, in his Book, and even in the Casting of *Lots*, the most casual and accidental Thing in the World (if there is any Thing truly so) he claims the Management and Disposal of them.

BUT, because Men may from hence take Occasion to fall into the Persuasion of a *Stoical* Fatality, and to believe that the Affairs of the World are so ordered by God, as to leave no Freedom to the Actions of voluntary Agents, but that the Wills of Men are determined by an absolute and irreversibile Decree: I shall therefore make it my Business, in the first Place, to clear up the Sense of the Words of my Text, and then consider, what useful Observations may be made from them, being rightly understood.

First, IN Order to understand the full Import of the Words of my Text, I shall consider,

I. THE



I. THE Nature and Properties of a *Lot*, SERM.  
with the different Sorts of them. VIII.

II. AFTER what Manner God is said  
to dispose of them.

I. AND, *First*, I shall endeavour to explain what is here meant by a *Lot*, which Foundation being laid, the rest of my Discourse will be rendered more plain, easy, and intelligible.

A *Lot*, then, is, by the best Writers defined to be a casual Event; purposely applied to the deciding something in Question; so that the Nature of a *Lot* lies in this, *viz.* in the Determination of our Choice, in some Matter we are unresolved of, by the Intervention of some casual and accidental Effect.

Now, amongst the various Distinctions of *Lots*, the most useful I look upon to be into *Extraordinary* and *Ordinary Lots*. *Extraordinary Lots* were those *Divine Lots* which were formerly made Use of in Sacred Matters, as an immediate Appeal to God himself, for the deciding something which could not be determined any other Way. *Ordinary Lots* were either *Civil*, such as were made Use of in Civil Matters; such as the Choice of Magistrates, where it was requisite that there should be

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some

SERM. some Contingency : Or *Lusurious Lots*,  
 VIII. *i. e.* such *Lots* as were made Use of for  
 Sport and Diversion ; these being the  
 different Sorts of *Lots* I come,

II. *Secondly*, To shew how God doth  
 dispose of them.

1. IT is plain, that, as for *Divine Lots*,  
 God did dispose of them in an extraordi-  
 nary Manner, and, as it were, point out,  
 with his own Finger, what he would have  
 performed and done ; they were appoint-  
 ed by him, to decide some Differences, and  
 to reveal his Mind and Will in several Ex-  
 igences ; and were properly made Use of  
 under a *Theocracy*, where God, by this  
 Means, did shew himself to be their su-  
 preme Legislator and Governor. He did  
 not, indeed, appear to them in a visible  
 Shape, and sway his Scepter amongst them ;  
 but he decided their Differences after such a  
 Manner, and made Use of such Means to  
 discover his Will to them, as made it  
 evident to the World, that an invisible  
 Being ordered all their Affairs and Coun-  
 sels, and stood at the Helm, and directed  
 all their Motions, to what Point or Coast  
 he thought most convenient. It is true,  
 these *Divine Lots* were aped and imitated  
 by the *Heathens* ; but then 'tis plain, that  
 their Answers were disposed by Trick and

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Artifice, and that their Gods were as dumb as their Oracles were observed to be, at the Appearance of the *Messiah*. SERM. VIII.

CIVIL *Lots* were Things wholly contingent, and designed to be so ; and therefore God did no otherwise dispose of them, than by concurring to the Action of the Creature ; the turning this Action of a Creature into a *Lot*, *i. e.* making this contingent Act to answer some Doubt, was wholly owing to those Persons who appealed to it.

AND after the same Manner did God dispose of *Lusurious Lots* ; he was no farther interested in them, than by the general Course of his Providence, ordering and disposing the Actions of his Creatures, to produce these necessary Effects, which the Preservation of their Beings necessarily required of them ; the Contingency of these Effects, in order to the deciding several Doubts, is wholly owing to the Compact and Agreement of those Persons who did commit the Decision of the Question to them ; and, being generally Things of the least Moment, there is little Prudence or Foresight, or Consultation, required to the deciding of them.

THE Words, being thus canvassed and considered, denote thus much to us : That,



SERM. though there is nothing in the World more  
 VIII. casual than a *Lot*, yet there is a *Providence*  
 of God which extends itself even to the  
 Disposition of them, and orders them as  
 seems best to his Divine Will and Plea-  
 sure.

*Secondly*, THE Words, so understood,  
 afford us these following Considerations :

- I. THAT there is a *Providence of God*,  
 which orders and disposes of all sublunary  
 Affairs, and concurs towards the  
 Production of the most trivial Events.
- II. THAT some Events are under the  
 more particular Direction of *Divine*  
*Providence*.
- III. THAT this Management doth by no  
 Means interfere with the Liberty of  
 Man's Will.
- IV. THAT such *Games*, as depend wholly  
 upon *Chance* and *Fortune*, are not ab-  
 solutely unlawful : And yet it is evi-  
 dent,
- V. THAT every good Christian ought to  
 be very circumspect in the Use of them.

I. THAT there is a *Providence* which  
 orders and disposes of all sublunary Affairs,  
 and concurs towards the Production of the  
 most trivial Events. This seems to be the

main

main Design and Intendment of the Words SERM.  
of my Text; which give us to under- VIII.  
stand, that even these Things, which de-  
pend upon *Chance* for their Essence and  
Being, yet are, in some Measure, under  
the Guidance and Influence of the great  
Creator and Governor of the World; no-  
thing can be more casual than a ludicrous  
*Lot*; the Nature of such *Lots* depending  
on this inseparable Property, that they are  
casual Events; for if there was any Cer-  
tainty in them, or if they admitted any  
Forefight, there could be no *Lottery* in  
them; and yet God, by his general Provi-  
dence, doth in some Measure dispose of  
these, *i. e.* he upholds and maintains them;  
he gives Men the Power to make Use of  
this Casualty to very good Purposes, to de-  
cide such Matters as could not so well be  
decided without them, and to conduce to  
their harmless Mirth and Diversion. And  
if the *Providence* of God in some Measure  
disposes of such casual Events, which are  
of so little Use to the good Government of  
the World, much more of those which  
have a certain Cause, and produce deter-  
minate Events, and are of greater Weight  
and Consequence, and conduce more to  
the Good of Mankind. For,

SERM. II, THESE Events are more particular,  
 VIII. ly the Effects of *Divine Providence*, and yet  
 even in these God doth not so interpose  
 as to introduce a fatal Necessity, or *Stoi-*  
*cal* Fatality, into the World; that is, he  
 doth not determine all Things by an ab-  
 solute Decree, so that they must produce  
 certain Events, and could not act other-  
 wise; for, though God might justly do  
 what he pleased with his own, yet his  
 Goodness inclines him to deal with his  
 Creatures with infinite Mercy and Be-  
 nignity, and to govern them according to  
 their different Natures, and those innate  
 Propensions and Appetites which he had  
 furnished them withal; and he expects,  
 that they should act, according to that Rank  
 and Order of Being in which he hath  
 placed them in the World: From reason-  
 able Beings he expects a reasonable Ser-  
 vice, the Pursuit of what is good, free-  
 ly and voluntarily; from the animal Na-  
 ture a necessary Closing with these Propen-  
 sions and Instincts he has placed in them;  
 and from these Rules he never varies, un-  
 less upon extraordinary Cases, when his  
 Honour and Glory is nearly concerned,  
 and it is for the Good of his Creatures  
 so to do; so that we may very safely  
 affirm, that the World for the most Part

is



is governed by second Causes, and God, **SERM.**  
having made it in due Weight, Measure, **VIII.**  
and Proportion, suffers it to go on in that  
Order it was at first disposed, unless when  
he in his wonderful Wisdom sees fit to  
interpose, and, in some single Instances, to  
reverse his own Orders, and to dispense  
with his stated Laws. This, being con-  
sidered, will give us Light into the dark  
and mysterious Dispensations of *Divine*  
*Providence*; and it will plainly appear, that  
God doth concur and bear some Part in  
all the Transactions of his dependent Crea-  
tures; and that this Concurrence of his is  
properly termed his *Providence*, or, which  
is the same Thing, that Provision which  
he has made, for the Being and Well-  
being of his Creatures. To all necessary A-  
gents God concurs to the natural Act; to  
all voluntary Agents by proposing suitable  
Motives, and enlightening their Under-  
standings, and furnishing them with those  
good Things they labour after, but are  
not able to obtain without his Assistance;  
and thus he conveys his good Gifts to all  
his Creatures in Proportion to their Ca-  
pacities, and their Qualifications to receive  
them; which being granted, it will ap-  
pear,

SERM. III. THAT the Belief of a Providence  
 VIII. doth by no Means interfere with the Liberty of Man's Will; for, Man being a rational Creature, endowed with a Freedom of Will and Liberty of acting, God has adapted his Laws to his Nature, and is pleased to move the Wills of Men by such Means as do not put any Force upon them; but sweetly attracts them to such Things as are good and convenient for them, and averts them from those which are evil; and this is the Reason why he doth not reclaim Sinners by any irresistible Impulse of his Power, or uphold the Virtuous by irresistible Grace; but leaves them so much at their Liberty, and gives them so much Assistance only, as that the evil Man may by the Use of these Means, together with his own Endeavours, turn from the Evil of his Ways and live; and the good Man may persevere in Goodness; and, on the Contrary, the evil Man may resist the gracious Overtures of God's Assistance, and hereby harden his Heart, and give himself over to commit Sin with Greediness; and the virtuous Person, by neglecting to make Use of that Grace God has entrusted him with, may fall from his Goodness, run into the Paths of Wicked-

ness

ness and Errors, and finally miscarry ; so SERM.  
that, upon the Whole, it appears, that the VIII.  
Belief that God governs the World, even  
in the smallest Matters, the most minute  
Circumstances of Action, doth by no Means  
interfere with the Belief of the free Act-  
ings of our Wills.

IV. IT is evident from hence, that those  
*Games*, which depend wholly on *Chance*  
and *Fortune*, are not absolutely unlaw-  
ful.

It is true there have been several pious  
and learned Men, who have held, that  
all *Games*, depending on *Chance*, are ut-  
terly unlawful, and they have inveighed  
bitterly in their Sermons, and wrote ma-  
ny Books to maintain their Opinions.  
The narrow Compass of a Sermon will not  
suffer me to give you the Substance of  
what they have said on this Subject ; but  
it will be very useful to observe, that all  
their Arguments seem to be built upon  
a sandy Foundation, which, being under-  
mined, will utterly subvert the whole  
Superstructure, or else levelled against  
the Abuse of those *Games*, which must  
be confessed to be very great. Now the  
Ground they go upon is this : That *Chance*  
and *Fortune* are Words of the same Im-  
port with God's *Providence*, and that,  
where



SERMON. where there is most *Chance*, there the  
 VIII. Actings of God's *particular Providence* are  
 most visible; whereas the Contrary to both  
 these is true; *First*, That there is a wide  
 Difference between *Fortune* or *Chance*, and  
*Divine Providence*; the one being the Act  
 of the Creator, considered as ruling and  
 governing the World, the other the Ef-  
 fects of the Creature, considered as a free  
 Agent. And, *Secondly*, it is evident, that,  
 in Things subject to *Chance* and *Fortune*,  
 God concurs only by his *general Provi-*  
*dence*; and that Casualty is an Affection  
 of the Operation of the Creature; which  
 being considered, it will appear, that all  
 those Arguments which seem to prove,  
 that there is a *particular Providence*, which  
 orders and disposes of *Lots*, or such *Games*  
 as depend on them, and that God doth  
 particularly determine what shall fall out,  
 and what shall be every particular Man's  
*Lot* and *Share*, are very superstitious and  
 inconclusive, and by no Means prove  
 what they are designed for. *The Lot* is,  
 indeed, *cast into the Lap, and the whole*  
*Disposing thereof is of the Lord*; but God  
 doth dispose of them differently, accord-  
 ing to the different Nature of the Sub-  
 ject they are exercised about, and *Luso-*  
*rious Lots* being of the least Importance,  
 and

and of the most trifling Concern, God SERM.  
disposes of them only by a general Con- VIII.  
currence to the Action of the Creature,   
and giving them up to that natural Ca-  
sualty contained in them; I mean, it  
is the Nature of a *Lot* to be casual, and  
therefore God doth not see fit to alter its  
Nature, or to interpose in so trifling a  
Concern by the particular Direction of  
his *Divine Providence*. This being right-  
ly understood, it will plainly appear, that  
such *Games*, as depend upon *Lottery* and  
*Chance*, are in themselves lawful, though  
very liable to be abused; and that a good  
Christian may safely make Use of them,  
for his Recreation and Refreshment, pro-  
vided he keeps within due Bounds, and  
doth not transgress those Rules which the  
Christian Religion has set: And what these  
are will be evident by shewing,

V. THAT every good Christian ought  
to be very circumspect in the Use of these  
*Games*; because they are very liable to  
be abused, and our daily Experience will  
convince us, that much Evil and Mischief  
is produced by them, the Devil making  
Use of the most innocent Recreations to  
insnare us into Sin; and either to make  
us retrench ourselves in our innocent Li-  
berty wholly, or to make them Traps,  
and

SERM. and Snares, or Stumbling-blocks, in our  
 VIII. Way. And therefore I have compre-  
 hended the most necessary Rules of *Play*  
 or *Lottery* under these following Cau-  
 tions :

- I. LET us take Care that we do not  
 spend too much Time in those *Games*.
- II. THAT our Affections be not too deep-  
 ly engaged in them.
- III. THAT we do not play for Things  
 of too great Value.
- IV. THAT we give no Offence to others.
- V. THAT no Prophaneness, Presumption,  
 or Superstition be intermixed with our  
 Sports and Recreations.

I. THAT we do not spend too much  
 Time in these Recreations, and turn that  
 into a Business and Employment, which  
 ought to be made Use of only as a Di-  
 version from more serious and weighty  
 Matters. Our Time is a Talent intrust-  
 ed with us by the great Proprietor of  
 the World, of which a rigorous Account  
 must be given at the Last Day ; and how  
 will those Persons be confounded when the  
 Devil shall bring in his Indictment against  
 them, " So much Time spent in Idle-  
 ness, and doing nothing ; so much in  
 " *Gaming*



“ *Gaming*, and doing worse than nothing; SERM.  
“ so many whole Nights” (which the VIII.  
Primitive Christians used to spend in   
Prayer and Devotion) “ passed away at  
“ Cards and Dice; in losing their own,  
“ or in defrauding others of their Estates?”  
Is our precious Time thus to be squandered away? And those gracious Opportunities, which God has given us to provide for our Souls, thus to be neglected? Can this properly be said to live the Life of a Christian, when we do not so much as design or aim at God’s Glory, or to obtain any Good for ourselves or Neighbours? For Shame, let us make a better Use of these precious Hours, which fly so swiftly away, and yet, when they are gone, can never be recalled again. Let us use these and all other Diversions in so moderate a Manner, as not to occasion the Neglect of God’s Worship, or any Omision of our Duty, either in our lawful Callings, or in the Care of our Families. Let fit and proper Times be taken for them, and such Rules and Limitations observed, as Reason and Christian Prudence will direct.

II. LET us take Care that we do not engage our Affections too deeply in these *Games*. They ought to be made  
Use

SERM. Use of for Diversion, not to be made out

VIII. Business; and therefore, that Person, who

cannot be easy at Play, who is apt to break out into inordinate Passion on evil Success; who is as intent upon the Success of the *Game*, as if it was his Livelihood; who cannot be chearful when he loses as well as when he wins; such an one ought to deny himself the Use of all Manner of *Games*, and wholly to refrain from them: Much more when he is apt to charge God foolishly; to break out into sinful Passions; to be peevish and quarrellsome; for such an one to use these *Games*, is to lead himself into Temptation, and to stake his immortal Soul against a little Profit or Pleasure.

III. We must take Care that we do not play for Things of too great a Value. The right End of Play is not Gain, but Diversion; and he, that plays for more than he is willing to lose, transgresses this Rule. Things of the least Moment only ought to be referred to the Decision of *Chance* or *Fortune*; greater Matters ought not to be trifled away; we rob our own Families, or our Neighbours, when we play for more than either we, or our Neighbours, can conveniently part with, or may justly be expended by either of us, on  
our

our lawful Diverſion. Our Eye and De- SERM.  
ſign in Play ought not to be fixed upon VIII.  
our Neighbour's Goods, for this is a plain  
Breach of the Tenth Commandment; but  
our Deſign ought to be our mutual Pleaſure  
and Diverſion, and, ſo far as we comply  
with this End, we act lawfully.

IV. IN our Uſe of theſe Games, let us  
take Care that we give no Offence to  
others, who are not convinced of the  
Lawfulneſs of theſe Games, or do not un-  
derſtand the Extent of our Goſpel Liber-  
ty ſo well as ourſelves; for, if the *Apoſtle*  
would deny himſelf the Satisfaction of *eat-  
ing Fleſh* as long as he lived, rather than  
*offend a weak Brother*, it is certainly our  
Duty, to refrain from theſe Games, when  
we foreſee that more Damage will accrue  
to others by them, than will be compenſat-  
ed by the Satisfaction and Pleaſure we  
take in the Uſe of them. Many there  
are who think all Games, depending up-  
on *Chance* and *Lottery*, utterly unlawful;  
to draw in ſuch Men to bear us Com-  
pany in Play, contrary to the Dictates of  
their Conſcience, or to play in Oppoſi-  
tion to their Commands, if they are our  
Superiors or Governors, is certainly to  
give Offence to thoſe, to whoſe Judg-  
ments



SERM. ments we ought to pay a greater Deference  
VIII. and Submission.

~ V. and Lastly, IN the Use of Games depending upon *Chance* and *Lottery*, let us avoid Prophaneness on the one Hand, and Superstition on the other; as we must *eat and drink*, so we must play and divert ourselves *to the Glory of God*; *i. e.* we must perform our civil and natural Actions, as well as our spiritual Devotions, like Men who live under the Eye of an all-seeing God. The most trivial Action that we perform is registered in God's Book, and we must give an Account of it; for, if we must give an Account of every *vain Thought* or *idle Word*, much more of all our Actions, though of never so little Concern; and, therefore, we ought to take Care that we do nothing which we foresee will displease God, or wound our own Conscience. And, as we must hereby avoid Prophaneness on the one Hand, so we must take equal Care to flee from Superstition on the other. Men are apt to fancy, that, in *Games* depending upon *Chance* and *Fortune*, there is a more immediate *Hand of Providence*, and that in *Lottery* it is very proper to expect, and by Consequence to invoke God's immediate Assistance; whereas the Contrary is evident, and that there is no Action in  
our

our Lives wherein we have less Reason SERM.  
VIII.  
to fancy that God interposes, than in such

Games as depend upon *Lottery, Chance,*

and *Fortune*. It is a notorious Point of

Superstition to make Fortune a Goddess,

to invoke her, and to expect Help from

her in the Management of our *Games*, as

the *Heathens* did; or, on the other Hand,

to pray to God for Assistance in such

light and trivial Concerns as those; it is

a Sin of the like Nature, as to take God's

Name into our Mouths on every trifling

Occasion; our Awe and Reverence of

God's Majesty ought to be so great, that

we ought not to call him in to our As-

sistance, *nisi dignus vindice nodus*, unless up-

on great and solemn Occasions: How fool-

ish then is it to desire God to direct us

in such a Matter, in which we ourselves

are very indifferent and unconcerned how

it goes? And, if we are not thus indifferent,

we ought not to commit the Decision of

it to *Lottery* and *Chance*. • It is true, the

Text tells us, *That the Lot is cast into*

*the Lap, but the whole Disposing thereof*

*is of the Lord*; which seems to intimate,

as if God did dispose of *Lots*, by his *par-*

*ticular Providence*, and order them to such

Ends as seemed best to his Divine Pleasure;

but this must be restrained to such extra-

ordinary

N

ordinary

SERM. ordinary and *Divine Lots* as were in Use  
 VIII. under the *Jewish* Oeconomy, when God  
 was their King and Governor, as well as  
 their God, and ruled and governed them  
 after a miraculous Manner ; for as to the  
 ordinary and *Luforious Lots*, such as are  
 made Use of in Civil Matters, or in Game  
 and Diverfion, it is and has already been  
 made evident, that God only concurs to  
 the Actions of the Creature, by his *ordi-*  
*nary Providence*, and that the *Chance* and  
*Fortune* of the Play is wholly owing to  
 fuch fecond Caufes, as God doth not inter-  
 fere or intermeddle with; and therefore to  
 expect God's immediate Affiftance herein,  
 is to be guilty of egregious Folly and Su-  
 perftition. For Example, in a *Lottery* God  
 gives Man Understanding to frame and  
 contrive it, to difpofe the *Lots* and to or-  
 der the whole Management of the Game,  
 and to perform all the natural Actions;  
 but the Determination what *Lot* fhall  
 come up firft or laft, fooner or later, and  
 by Confequence, who fhall have the Be-  
 nefit of it, depends upon the Motion of  
 the Wheel and the Difpofition of the  
*Lots*, and always happens according to thofe  
 Laws of Motion, which God has placed in  
 the Universe; and it would be high Pre-  
 fumption, as well as fottifh Superftition, to  
 expect



expect that God should alter the stated SERM.  
 Course of Things, in Matters of Pleasure VIII.  
 and Diversion. I have insisted the longer  
 upon this Point, because I fear there are  
 many who are guilty of this Sort of Su-  
 perstition, and are more solemn in their  
 Addresses to God on such trifling Oc-  
 casions as these, than in their spiritual  
 Concerns, in which they may go upon  
 surer Grounds, and have the Promises of  
 God that they shall meet with their de-  
 sired Success.

AND now what remains, but consider-  
 ing that there is a *Divine Providence*,  
 which orders and disposes of all sublu-  
 nary Affairs, and in some Measure con-  
 curs to the Production of the most tri-  
 vial Events, that we, by leading holy and  
 religious Lives intitle ourselves to his Fa-  
 vour, and cast ourselves under his Pro-  
 tection; and that, all our Actions being be-  
 gun, continued, and ended in him, and  
 to his Honour, we may so glorify his holy  
 Name, as finally to obtain everlasting Life  
 through *Jesus Christ* our Lord.

## S E R M O N IX.

GOD is Immutable.

JAMES i. 17.

*With whom is no Variableness,  
neither Shadow of Turning.*SERM.  
IX.

**I**T is the great Happiness and Privilege of a Christian, that, amidst all the several Changes and Chances of this sublunary World, he can fix his Trust and Confidence upon that *Rock of Ages*, which remains *firm and Immutable*; and that, in the midst of all his Wants and Distresses, he is assured, that there is a good God who can and will supply him, when he sees it fit so to do. This we are taught in the Verse from whence my Text is taken, that *Every good Gift, and every perfect Gift, is from above, and cometh down from the Father of Lights, with whom is no Variableness, neither Shadow of Turning.*

IN

IN which Words the Design of the *A-* SERM.  
*postle* is to comfort the Christians in a Day IX.  
of Persecution, and to raise up their Spi-  
rits, from these two Considerations, *First*,  
That there was a God in Heaven who  
is the Fountain of all Good, and could sup-  
ply them with all those good Things they  
stood in Need of; and *Secondly*, That this  
God was *Unchangeable* and *Immutable* in  
his Nature, as well as in his Purposes  
and Decrees, and therefore would make  
good his Promises to them, and protect,  
assist, and defend those who put their  
Trust in him. My Business at present  
shall be, to consider the *Immutability of*  
*God*; and from thence, by Way of Infe-  
rence, I shall easily make out the Reason-  
ableness of our Trust and Dependence on  
him; for *with him there is no Variableness,*  
*nor Shadow of Turning*; from which Words  
I shall shew,

- I. THAT *God is truly Immutable* or *Un-  
changeable*.
- II. I SHALL answer some Objections;  
And,
- III. SHEW what Influence the Considera-  
tion of *God's Immutability* ought to have  
upon our Lives and Conversations.



SERM. I. THAT God is truly Immutable or  
 IX. *Unchangeable.* It is affirmed in the Text,  
 that in him *there is no Variableness, nor  
 Shadow of Turning.* The Words are  
 an Allusion to the Sun, which, though  
 the most splendid and glorious Being in  
 the Universe, yet has its Risings and Set-  
 tings, its Approaches and Recesses; some-  
 times it shines bright upon us, and cheers  
 and blesses us with its comfortable Gleam;  
 anon, it is clouded with Mists and Fogs,  
 it is obscured and hid from us, and at  
 Night leaves us to visit the remoter Re-  
 gions of the Earth: But God is a constant  
 and immoveable Good, he is always the  
 same, he never leaves nor forsakes them  
 who put their Trust in him; the Light  
 of his Countenance cannot be obscured by  
 the Intervention of any worldly Trouble;  
 no malign Aspect can hinder the In-  
 fluence of his Grace upon the Soul, or  
 divert the gracious Purposes of his Love  
 towards us; in him *there is no Variable-  
 ness, nor Shadow of Turning;* which will  
 more plainly appear, by considering, *First,*  
 That God is free from all Changes, as to  
 his Nature; and, *Secondly,* From all In-  
 constancy, as to his Purpose.

I. THAT

I. THAT God is free from all Changes, SERM.  
as to his Nature, will appear from these IX.  
following Considerations.

1. THIS was the Opinion of the wisest and most virtuous amongst the *Heathens*; those who were most eminent for strict Reasoning, and good Morals, believed and taught this Divine Truth, that *God was Immutable*, and therefore *Pythagoras* called God, or the good Being, αὐτὸν, *idem*, or that Being which is always the same; but the evil Principle ἑσπερ, or that Being which is always changing, and never remains in the same State or Condition; with him agrees the divine *Plato*, who gives us this Description of God, that he is a Being who is always the same; and thus *Boetius*, *Stabilisque manens dat cuncta moveri*; he is unmoveable himself, and yet gives Being and Motion to all Things besides. And these Descriptions of God are exactly agreeable to those which God has made of himself in the Holy Writ, where he gives this Description of himself, and commands *Moses* to say, *I am that I am*, Exod. iii. *I am hath sent me unto you*; thereby discovering to them these two essential Properties of his Nature, his *Eternity* and *Immutability*. *I am* denotes to us his *Eternity*; *that I am*, or *the same that I am*, his

SERM. his *Immutability*. I shall not insist on those

IX. Observations, which the *Rabbins*, and some modern learned Men, make upon the Word *Jehovah*, because the Doctrine of God's *Immutability* is built upon a more solid Foundation, and sound Reasoning, and has no Need of such weak Props to uphold and support it. For,

2. GOD must needs be *Immutable*, because he is a Being of absolute Perfection. The first Notion which we have of a God is, that he is a Being who comprehends in himself all possible Perfection; and, if so, he must be unchangeable: For all Change is either for the better, or the worse. God cannot change for the worse, for then he would lose some Perfection which he was possessed of: Neither can he change for the better, for that would imply, that he gained some Perfection which he had not before; either of which are equally absurd.

3. GOD's *Immutability* may be plainly inferred from his Eternity. For all Change necessarily implies that something is either acquired by it, or lost by it, which must be performed in Time; there must be supposed a Time when that, which is acquired, was not, and when it began to have a Being; and whatsoever has a Beginning, cannot



cannot be from Eternity: For the true SERM.  
 Notion of an eternal Being is, a Being IX.  
 which always was the same, and always  
 will remain so. So that there is this plain  
 Difference between Immortality and Eter-  
 nity, that the one is consistent with Change-  
 ableness, the other not: For, could we  
 suppose that God was subject to, any  
 Change, he might still be immortal, but  
 not eternal; for whatsoever hath any Di-  
 minution, or Increase, cannot be properly  
 and intirely eternal.

I PROCEED to shew, *Secondly,*

THAT God is free from all Inconstancy,  
 as to his Purpose, as well as Change, as to  
 his Nature. To demonstrate this, it will  
 be necessary to premise, that a Change in  
 Purpose is, when any one determines to  
 do that now, which before he determined  
 not to do, or to do the quite Contrary;  
 when his Will is byassed either by his Un-  
 derstanding or his Affections; when he  
 apprehends that under the Notion of  
 Good, which he looked upon as Evil be-  
 fore; and therefore what he avoided and  
 fled from, he now closes with and embra-  
 ces, hugs and caresses, and esteems his  
 proper Good and true Happiness. Now,  
 that no such Change as this can affect God,  
 is plain,

I. BE-

SERM. I. BECAUSE there is no Difference in

IX. God, between his Will and his Understanding ; they are represented to us, as two distinct Faculties ; and, when God speaks to us, he accommodates himself to our Apprehensions ; but they are, indeed, the same. For, as God knows all Things by one simple Act of Vision, so he wills all Things by one Act of Volition. So that, from the *Immutability* of God's Essence, we may reasonably infer the *Immutability* of his Purpose and Counsel : And therefore it is worth our Observation, that the Decrees and Purposes of God, in Scripture, are not expressed by Counsels in the Plural Number, but Counsel, to hold forth to us the Uniformity of God's Will ; and that, though it branches itself out into many different Acts towards the Creature, yet they all proceed from the same Root, and are the different Links of the same Chain ; the Divine Decrees and Purposes always proceed from the same Principle, and are guided by the same Rule, the infinite Wisdom, and exact Rectitude and Holiness of his Nature ; and therefore they must necessarily be unalterable and unchangeable,

I SHALL

I SHALL only add, that, if it were possible for the Will of God to change, it must be from one of these two Reasons: either because he doth not foresee the consequences of Things, or hath not Power to bring about what he has purposed; to attribute either of these to God would be the highest Folly and Impiety. For, since Knowledge and Wisdom are Perfections which constitute both these Attributes, they must needs extend to all Things, and be as infinite as God himself. An infinite Understanding is present with all the Causes and Effects which can possibly happen, it beholds every Thing in its true source and Original, and suffers nothing to lie hid from his all-seeing Eye: And therefore all Things, whether past or to come, are present with him. Infinite Wisdom resolves and determines all Things upon the justest Motives, and the highest Reason; he determines to do every Thing, because he foresees that it is best so to be done; his Will enjoys the most noble and perfect Freedom, that is, to be determined by nothing without itself, but only by its own natural Rectitude and Holiness, which always guides it to do that which is most just, most fit, and most reasonable to be done: And therefore, since God's Purposes



SERM. Purposes and Decrees are not bare Acts of

IX. his Will, but Acts of his Counsel ; since he  
 Eph. i. 11. *worketh all Things after the Counsel of his  
 own Will* : Therefore all his Counsels  
 must needs be *Immutable*, because they are  
 the Dictates of unbounded Knowledge, and  
 unerring Wisdom ; neither,

2dly, DO TH God want Power to bring  
 about whatsoever he purposes and designs.  
 He, that first framed and formed all Things  
 out of nothing, can govern and direct  
 them ; that Potter which first formed and  
 wrought the Clay, and gave Beauty and  
 Order to the rude and undigested Mass,  
 can either preserve it, or break it in Pieces :  
 And therefore we may, with good Rea-  
 son, conclude, that, since God doth not  
 want Knowledge and Wisdom to frame  
 and dispose his Decrees, nor Power to ex-  
 ecute and effect them, there can be no Rea-  
 son given why they should not attain their  
 End, or why God should change what  
 upon the best Reasons he has resolved  
 on.

II. THERE are some Objections, in-  
 deed, which are raised against this Doc-  
 trine of God's *Immutability*, and which  
 have, at least, some Shew of Reason, and  
 these I come to consider in my next Place :  
 And,

I. It

I. IT is objected, that God must needs SERM.  
 be subject to Change, because he is said, IX.  
 in Scripture, to repent. He is sometimes   
 said to repent of the Good he has pro-  
 mised, *At what Instant I shall speak concern-* Jer. xviii.  
*a Nation, and concerning a Kingdom, to* 9, 10.  
*build and to plant it; if it do Evil in my*  
*Sight, that it obey not my Voice, then I will*  
*repent of the Good wherewith I said I would*  
*benefit them.* Sometimes God is said to  
 repent of the Evil which he threatens a-  
 gainst a Person or a People, *And the Lord* Ex. xxxii.  
*repented of the Evil which he thought to do* 14.  
*unto his People.* Or sometimes he is said  
 to repent of his own Work, *And it re-* Gen. vi.  
*penteth the Lord that he had made Man on* 6.  
*the Earth, and it grieved him at his Heart.*  
 All which Places of Scripture seem to in-  
 timate, as if God altered his Mind, as if  
 there was some Commotion in him, and  
 that he was affected with the same Pertur-  
 bations and Passions we Men are moved  
 withal: And, if so, then this must needs  
 infer some Change in him.

To which I answer, that in all these  
 Texts of Scripture, and in many others,  
 God accommodates himself to our weak  
 Capacities, and speaks to us as Men: This  
 is the Language of the Holy Writ; the  
 Design of which is, to discover God's Na-  
 ture

SERM. ture and Will to us ; and because God

IX. an infinitely glorious Being, exalted  
 much above our Apprehension, as our  
 Praise ; since no Words are capable of  
 framing in our Minds any just and ade-  
 quate Ideas of God's infinite Perfections  
 therefore God is pleased to condescend  
 far as to discourse with us in our own  
 Language, to describe himself to us, as if  
 he were a Man like ourselves, and to set  
 forth his Actions, as if they were moved  
 with the same Springs and Wheels with  
 ours, and proceeded from the same Prin-  
 ciples ; that so we may the better under-  
 stand how to transcribe his Perfections  
 and to obey his Commands. Hence it is  
 that God is so frequently represented in  
 Scripture, as having Hands, and Feet, and  
 other bodily Members ; that he is describ-  
 ed with the different Passions of the Soul  
 to grieve, to be glad, and to repent : Not  
 that any of these can be truly and pro-  
 perly ascribed to God ; he is an infinite-  
 ly pure and holy Spirit, and is not capa-  
 ble of those Passions, which are Signs of  
 Weakness and Impotence, which cannot  
 be attributed to an infinitely good, an in-  
 finitely wise, and powerful Being. So  
 that, when God is said to repent, it only  
 implies thus much,

I. THAT



(1.) THAT the Things, declared to be SERM.  
the Objects of Joy, and Grief, and Repen- IX.  
tance, are of that Nature, that, if God

were capable of our Passions, he would, in such Cases, discover himself as we do: Thus, when the Heavens, and Earth, and Sea are called upon to praise and magnify the Name of God, the Meaning is only to shew, that, if the Heavens, and Earth, and Sea had Natures capable of these Passions, they would, and ought to express them, upon these Occasions: So would God have Joy at the Conversion of a Sinner, and Grief at the unworthy Carriage and Disobedience of Men, and repent of his Kindness, when Men abuse it, and repent of his Punishment, when Men reform under his Rod; if the glorious Majesty were capable of such Resentments and Passions.

OR, (2.) God is then said to repent, when he doth those Things which Men use to do, when they repent; they forbear to do what they have done, and do the Contrary; so that, when God is said to repent of Evil, the Meaning is, that he doth not do the Evil that he hath threatened, or doth not persist in doing that which he had begun to do; there is a Change in the Creature, but no Change in God, either

SERM. either in his Nature or Decree. *Deus mu-*

IX. *tat facta, non mutat consilia*; and therefore, in other Places of the Holy Writ, we are told plainly, that *God is not a Man, that he should repent.*

OR (3.) Repentance in God denotes the Action he is about to do, rather than any Thing in his own Nature, or any Change in his eternal Purpose. God's Repenting of his Kindness is an Inflicting of that Punishment, which the Creature, by the Change of his Carriage, has justly merited and deserved: His Repenting of Evil threatened is the With-holding of Punishment denounced, when Man submits to his Authority, and humbly acknowledges his Crime. In all, or either of these Senses, God may be said to repent; which doth not imply any Change in God, or interfere with the true and genuine Notion of God's *Immutability*. It is objected,

2. THAT God promises and threatens many Things which never come to pass. The Prophet *Isaiab* is sent unto King *Hezekiah*, to command him to *set his House in Order, for he should die, and not live*; and this is prefaced with *Thus saith the Lord*; and yet we read, that God promises to *add to his Days fifteen Years.*

2 Kings  
xx. 1.

Ver. 6.

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Years. And the Prophet tells the Ninevites, SERM.  
 that, after forty Days, Nineveh should be IX.  
 destroyed; and yet we find in the last Verse Jonah iii.  
 of this Chapter, that, upon their Repen- 4:  
 tance, God did not bring this Judgment  
 upon them. Is not God true? Shall not  
 the Word that is gone out of his Mouth  
 be accomplished? How can these Things  
 consist with God's Immutability? To  
 which I answer,

THAT the Promises and Threatenings  
 in Scripture are conditional, and however  
 the Conditions were uncertain in Respect  
 of Men, yet they were not so in Respect  
 of God. His Promises are made with the  
 Conditions of Faith and Obedience; And Deut.  
*the Lord shall make thee the Head, and not xxviii. 13*  
*the Tail; and thou shalt be above only, and*  
*shalt not be beneath: if that thou hearken*  
*unto the Commandments of the Lord thy God;*  
*which I command thee this Day to observe*  
*and to do them.* And in like Manner;  
 God's Threatenings are denounced with an  
 Exception of Conversion and Repentance;  
*At what Instant I shall speak concerning a Jer. xviii.*  
*Nation, and concerning a Kingdom, to pluck 7. 8. &c.*  
*up, and to pull down, and to destroy it: If*  
*that Nation, against whom I have pronoun-*  
*ced, turn from their Evil, I will repent of*  
*the Evil that I thought to do unto them.*

○

And



SERM. *And at what Instant I shall speak concerning*  
 IX. *a Nation, and concerning a Kingdom, to build*  
 { *and to plant it: If it do Evil in my Sight,*  
*that it obey not my Voice, then I will re-*  
*pent of the Good wherewith I said I would*  
*benefit them.* This is an universal Rule  
 by which all the particular Cases of this  
 Nature are to be tried, so that, when Man  
 repents of his Sin, the Purpose of God  
 remains unchangeable; he is always equal  
 to himself, and true to his own Purpose  
 and Decrees; it is not He that changes  
 but Man. It is confessed that this Con-  
 dition is not always expressed, neither is it  
 necessary that it should be; this general  
 Rule, revealed in Scripture, is sufficient for  
 those who enjoy the Benefit of the Revela-  
 tion; and, in others, there is implanted a na-  
 tural Notion of God's Goodness upon their  
 Repentance. And it is probable, that this  
 Condition is frequently omitted, to the End  
 that the more terrible and peremptory the  
 Threatenings of God are, and the Denun-  
 ciations of his Vengeance, the more effec-  
 tual they may be to awaken, and rouse  
 up, the secure and presumptuous Offenders  
 to humble them under the Sense of their  
 Demerit, and to bring them to an Acknow-  
 ledgment of his righteous Justice: And  
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ed, they are to be conditionally interpreted, SERM.  
with a Reservation in Case of Repentance. IX.

3. IT may be further objected : If God is *immutable*, then why do we pray unto him ? Why do we pray for those Things he is resolved not to give us, and deprecate those Judgments he is resolved to inflict upon us ? To which I answer, That Prayer is the Condition upon which God has promised us the good Things of this Life, and of a better ; this we are assured, that we have a Right and Title to nothing, without we ask it of God ; *for every good Gift is from above*, and is sanctified by the Word of God and Prayer ; and whosoever enjoys the good Things of God, without paying him this Homage of his Prayers and Adorations, usurps upon God's Prerogative and Sovereignty, and shall be accountable for it at the Last Day. When therefore God grants us the good Things we pray for, or diverts those Judgments which hang over our Heads, upon our Humiliation and Repentance, he is not therefore subject to any Change, neither are his Purposes and Decrees ineffectual ; because his original Decree was, to pardon the Sinner upon his sincere and unfeigned Repentance, and to answer the Prayers of every obedient

SERM. and believing Petitioner ; and either to  
 IX. grant them their Requests, or something  
 better in the Place of them.

THUS I have endeavoured to answer the chief and principal Objections, which are commonly made against the *Immutability* of God. I shall only add, that, if there remain any Doubts and Scruples in the Mind of any one, let him consider what a vast Distance there is between the Being of an infinite God, and our finite Understandings ; and therefore it is no Wonder that we cannot comprehend his incommunicable Attributes, and that there should be some Difficulties in the Divine Nature that we cannot solve ; which may serve to exercise our Faith and Reverence, but do not come within the Compass of our nice Speculations, or lie level to our Reason. Let us therefore be wise according to Godliness ; let us lay our Mouths in the Dust, when we presume to contemplate the Perfections of our Creator ; let Reason give Place to our Faith ; Argument to Revelation ; and what we cannot demonstrate, let us believe. This will be our Comfort, that it is far better to err with an humble Mind, and a Resignation of our Understanding to the Discipline of the Gospel, than, by a

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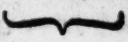
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proud and presumptuous Enquiry into SERM.  
Things above our Reach, to happen upon IX.  
the Truth : And therefore I shall only,   
in the

III. PLACE, make an Inference or two  
from what I have said, and so conclude.

1. HENCE we may learn to imitate,  
as far as we can, this Divine Attribute of  
God's Unchangeableness : To remain *sted-*  
*fast, unmoveable, always abounding in the*  
*Work of the Lord, forasmuch as we know*  
*that our Labour is not in vain in the Lord.*  
Let us resolve to be steadfast in our Love  
towards God, and in our Charity towards  
Men ; in our Profession of the fundamen-  
tal Truths of our Religion, and in the  
Practice of a virtuous and holy Life ; this is  
to be *perfect, as our Father in Heaven is*  
*perfect, i. e. to approach as near towards*  
Perfection, and to transcribe and copy out  
the Divine Nature, as far as the Weak-  
ness and Frailty of ours will permit ;  
hence we may infer,

2. How miserable the Condition of  
wicked Men is, and will be, who offend  
against a God *immutable* in his Nature,  
which is the true Standard of his Love or  
Hatred towards his Creatures ; *immutable*  
in his Purposes, and so will not change the  
Word which is gone out of his Mouth.

SERM. The Rectitude of God's Nature is such,

IX. that he cannot allow or approve of Sin;

and his Justice obliges him to deal with the Sinner according to his Demerit, and to reward or punish every one according to their Deeds. Rewards and Punishments do not proceed from the arbitrary Dictates of God's Will, but naturally flow from the Divine Nature, which cannot but love that which is agreeable to it, and by Consequence that which is good; and hate those Actions which are disagreeable and irregular, and by Consequence are evil. Consider this, therefore, all you who indulge yourselves in any sinful Course of Life, or allow yourselves in the Commission of any one known Sin; consider, that, by every unlawful Act that you commit, you make God your Enemy; who is always the same in Knowledge, and cannot forget your Offences; the same in Will, and cannot love or approve of your unrighteous Practices; the same in Justice and Power, and therefore will make good his Threatenings, and effectually vindicate the Honour of his Laws, either in the Conversion or Punishment of the Sinner.

Isaiah  
xxvi. 4.

3. HENCE we may learn to put our Trust in God, in every Condition. *Trust ye in the Lord for ever, for in the Lord* *for ever*

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*boab is everlasting Strength.* God is SERM.  
 called the *Rock of Ages*, as the Margin IX.  
 reads it in this Verse, because he always  
 remains firm and immoveable: He is the  
 same at all Times, and in all Places; he is  
 the *God of the Vallies*, as well as *the God of*  
*the Mountains*; and can as easily hear the  
 Petitions of the Wretch who lies in the  
 lowest Dungeon, as the Prayers of the  
 greatest Monarch who sits upon a Throne.  
 There is no Condition so miserable, but  
 God can and will deliver us out of it, if we  
 put our Trust in him. He delights to  
 exalt the Humble, and succour the Mife-  
 rable, and is never better pleased, than  
 when Men fit and qualify themselves, and  
 hereby render themselves capable of recei-  
 ving his Favours; for God is not as Man,  
 he is not a Friend to us in our Prosperity,  
 and then leaves us in our Adversity; but he  
 then doth us most Good, when we have  
 most Need of it, and is a *very ready Help*  
*in the Time of Trouble*. He has the Bowels  
 of a tender and indulgent Parent, and is a  
 Shield of Defence to all such as commit  
 themselves to his Protection; he not only  
 knows all our Wants, and has Power to  
 relieve them, but desires to be good and  
 gracious to those that serve him. Mercy  
 is his darling Attribute; it is that whereby  
 O 4 he



SERM. he endeavours to draw Mankind to him-

IX. self, and is the constant Argument he makes Use of; *for his Mercy endureth for ever.* Whither, therefore, should we flee in all our Wants, and in all our Distresses, in all our Dangers, and all our Calamities, but to that God who is an unexhaustible Fountain of Good; whose Arms are always stretched out to receive us, and his Power employed to protect and defend us?

4. HENCE we may infer, how reasonable a Thing it is to submit our Wills to God's Divine Will. For, though we should not presently be delivered from the Evil and Calamity we groan under, yet this we may be assured of, that God acts every Thing upon very wise and just Ends, and an unchangeable Rule of Goodness; and therefore will order and dispose of all Things so, as will tend most to our real Benefit and Advantage, if we put our Trust in him, and faithfully serve him. The Rectitude therefore of our Wills doth consist in a Conformity to the Divine Will, and in a quiet Submission of ourselves to all the various Dispensations of his good Providence; for, if we believe God to be by Nature unchangeably good, he will certainly do Good to those, who conform them-

themselves to his Image, and partake of SERM.  
his Divine Perfections. IX.

5. HENCE we may infer, how reasonable it is to prefer the Enjoyment of an *immutable* Good, before the good Things of this World, which are so fickle and changeable, when these stand in Competition one with the other, There is no wise Man but desires such a competent Proportion of this World's Goods, as may render his Passage through this World easy and comfortable. But when these Things cannot be had, without making Shipwreck of a good Conscience, and offending God, then he readily chooses rather to part with the fading and transient Blessings of this Life, than to lose the lasting Love and Favour of God, and a never-ending Felicity. Do but consider the Vanity of all the Enjoyments this World affords; how little Pleasure and Satisfaction they yield, and yet how speedily they pass away and are gone; and then, on the other Hand, contemplate the Joys and Pleasures which are to be had in the Love and Service of our good God, in a Life spent according to the Rules of Virtue and Religion. Let us but get a true and just Idea of those Joys which spring from a good Conscience, the Assurance of God's Favour,

SERMON. Favour, and the Light of his Countenance,

IX. and then we shall join with the *Psalmist* in that passionate Exclamation, *Whom have I in Heaven but thee? And there is none upon Earth that I desire besides thee.* The good Things of this World are uncertain and inconstant, empty and unsatisfactory; but, in the Love and Enjoyment of God, there is to be found a solid, steady, and permanent Felicity. In his Presence there is Fulness of Joy, and at his Right-hand are Pleasures for evermore. Which that we may all of us be Partakers of, God of his Mercy grant, for *Jesus Christ* his Sake.

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## S E R M O N X.

The wonderful Frame of Man's  
Body.

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P S A L M CXXXIX. 14.

*I will praise thee, for I am fearfully  
and wonderfully made; marvellous  
are thy Works, and that my Soul  
knoweth right well.*

**I**T is highly probable this *Psalm* was SERM.  
composed by *David*, when he lay un- X.  
der the Imputation of having evil  
Designs against *Saul*; for the Subject, Sam.  
of it is a solemn Appeal to God, in a Profes- xxiv. 9.  
sion of his Integrity, and a Representation  
of the Clearness of his Intentions before  
him, that he never suffered any such  
Thoughts as these to enter into his Heart;  
and, that he might make this the more  
credible, he declares his serious Belief of  
God's Omniscience; that he not only  
knew

SERM. knew all his Actions and Words, but  
 X. even the most secret Thoughts of his  
 Heart; nay, which is most wonderful,  
 all his Intentions and Inclinations were  
 known to him, before he had conceived  
 any Design, *Thou understandest my Thoughts  
 afar off*; and this he proves from the  
 Consideration of God's Omnipresence, for,  
 if God is every where, he must needs  
 know what is done in every Place; and  
 from God's being the Creator of Man,  
 for if God formed him in the Womb,  
 and *curiously wrought him in those lowest  
 Parts of the Earth*, it is but reasonable  
 to conclude, that he knew every Spring  
 and Wheel of this curious Machine; and  
 that the Qualifications, Intentions, Powers,  
 and Dispositions of every Member of his  
 Body were as well known to him, as if  
 they had been *writ in a Book*. The Consi-  
 deration of this struck him with Astonish-  
 ment, so that, whilst he mused upon these  
 Things, the Fire kindled within him, and  
 he could not forbear praising God with  
 his Tongue: *I will praise thee, for I am  
 fearfully and wonderfully made; marvel-  
 lous are thy Works, and that my Soul know-  
 eth right well.*

FROM hence I shall take Occasion to  
 consider:

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- I. THE wonderful Make and Frame of our Bodies : *I am fearfully and wonderfully made.* And, SERM.  
X.
- II. THOSE Obligations which result from hence.

I. LET us consider the wonderful Make and Frame of our Bodies. The great Creator of the Universe has left the Characters of his Wisdom and Power so plainly and visibly engraven upon every Part of his Workmanship, that they are very easy to be read and discovered by any diligent Enquirer ; so that every rational Creature must be left without Excuse, who doth not contemplate and admire them ; but upon his darling and favourite *Man* he has bestowed some peculiar Excellencies and Perfections, and graced him with many signal Favours, beyond the rest of the Creation, both in Relation to his Body and Soul. He was created last, when God gave the finishing Stroke to the Workmanship of his Hands, and therefore was made more perfect than the rest ; and is the System and Compendium of the Universe, containing all those Perfections which are scattered and diffused through the rest of the Creation, to whom those good Things are given with a liberal Hand,



SERM. Hand, which are more sparingly communicated to the rest of the Divine Offspring.

THIS is universally granted, as to the better Part of him, his Soul; which was at first created after God's own Image, and, when it fell from its original Purity and Holiness, had the Privilege of second Thoughts, and was permitted the Grace of Repentance, a Privilege denied to those apostate Angels, who fell from their first Station; but is not so generally considered with Relation to his Body. Some there are who fancy that Brutes excel, as to the animal Nature, and are much more perfect than Men. It is true, as to some particular Perfections, some Animals have the Pre-eminence; the Eagle is clearer-sighted, the Dog is more sagacious in Smelling; but, if we consider the whole Frame and Composition of our Bodies, we shall plainly discover, that there is a Divine Signature upon our Bodies as well as our Souls; and that, though all the Works of God are wonderful, yet there is a superlative Excellence conferred upon them. I shall only at present give you two Instances which are plain and visible to every one; *First*, That Man

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is the only Creature that walks upright, SERM.  
according to that of the Poet:

X.

*Os homini sublime dedit, cælumque tueri  
Jussit, & erectos ad sidera tollere vultus.*

And, *Secondly*, What is a natural Consequence of this, that Man is the only Creature who enjoys the Benefit of Hands; whereby he is enabled to perform many excellent Operations, and his Reason becomes more useful and beneficial to him; but the *wonderful Make and Frame of our Bodies* will more plainly appear by considering, *First*, The curious Formation of them in the Womb, and, *Secondly*, The admirable Frame and exact Disposition of their Parts, when they are formed.

I. IF we contemplate the first Formation of our Bodies in the Womb, the *Psalmist* tells us in the Words immediately following the Text, *My Substance was not hid from thee, when I was made in Secret, and curiously wrought in the lowest Parts of the Earth; i. e.* this Business of the Formation of my Body was not left to Chance or Fortune, but was the Effect of a Divine Power, which formed and shaped us in the Womb, and breathed into this dead Lump of Clay the *Breath*  
of

SERM. of Life. It was this Divine Power which

X. so curiously wrought us; the Word in the

Original signifies to work with a Needle, or to embroider, like that curious Working in Needle-work, which was used in the Hangings of the Tabernacle, expressed by the same Word; thus it is ren-

Exod.

xxvi. 36.

dered by Symmachus, *ἑνὸς ἰδίου, variegatus*

*fui*, I was wrought with Variety of cu-

rious Work; my Body, like a Raiment

of Needle-work and exquisite Embroi-

dery, was fashioned with Diversity of Fi-

gures and Variety of Colours; and every

Vein and Fibre of it, the Result of the

most admirable Contrivance, and unlimit-

ed Power of the Deity. And then it fol-

lows, *Thine Eyes did see my Substance, yet*

*being imperfect; and in thy Book all my*

*Members were written, which in Continu-*

*ance were fashioned, when as yet there was*

*none of them; i. e.* Thou in thy infinite

Wisdom didst know my Shape and Pro-

portion, and in what Order and Fashion

all my Parts were to be placed, before

they were compleatly finished; and by

thy infinite Power thou didst bring them

to Perfection by a gradual and continued

Motion. Thus this holy Prophet and

Divine Philosopher is led, by the Con-

templation of himself, to acknowledge the

infinite



infinite Wisdom and Power of the Deity; **SERM.**  
and by considering the wonderful Man- **X.**  
ner of his first Formation, and the cu-  
rious Contexture of his Body in the Womb,  
to conclude, that it must be the Ope-  
ration of the supreme Cause of all Things:  
Which will more plainly appear by con-  
sidering,

2. **THE** Contexture of our Parts, and  
the *admirable Make and Frame of our*  
*Bodies*, when they are produced and ap-  
pear in the World. Which that I may  
the more distinctly consider, I shall pro-  
ceed in this Order:

I. **I SHALL** shew the vast Number and  
Variety of those Parts of which our Bo-  
dies are composed.

II. **THE** exact Disposition of them.

III. **THEIR** mutual Tendency to promote  
the Good and Welfare of the Whole.

I. Of the vast Number and Variety of  
those Parts of which our Bodies are com-  
posed. The Anatomists reduce all the  
Parts of our Body to ten Sorts; the Skin,  
Membranes, the Flesh, Fibres, Veins, Ar-  
teries, Nerves, Ligaments, Cartilages, and  
Bones; without taking Notice of those  
Juices and Humours, which, being in per-  
petual

SERM. petual Flux and Motion, are not esteem-

X. ed as Parts of the Body ; though they are  
 the Subjects of the most noble Operations,  
 and in the right Constitution of them  
 the Health and Safety of the Whole doth  
 consist. I shall not enlarge my Discourse  
 upon every one of these Parts, and from  
 hence endeavour to demonstrate the al-  
 most infinite Number and Variety of  
 them ; but, from the single Considera-  
 tion of one of them, take my Measures  
 of the rest. The Bones are, of all the Parts  
 of our Bodies, the most easy to be num-  
 bered, as being most visible, and the im-  
 mediate Objects of our Sense ; they are  
 reckoned in the whole Body to be two  
 hundred and eighty-four : But then you  
 may consider, that every one of these differ  
 in Figure, Disposition, and Proportion,  
 Position, and Insertion of their proper  
 Veins, Nerves, and Arteries ; that there  
 is not one Bone in our Bodies like unto  
 another (excepting those which are in  
 Pairs) but that they differ from one an-  
 other by forty several Intentions and Qua-  
 lifications ; so that, in the right Placing  
 and Disposition of the Bones of our Bo-  
 dy, at least one hundred thousand Inten-  
 tions must be satisfied ; and, if one of these  
 is not exactly fitted and duly disposed

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there presently arises a remarkable Irregularity and Disorder. SERM.  
X.

Now if so great is the Variety of the Bones, which are the least in Number of all the Parts of our Body, what Accounts shall we give of those which are more numerous; of the Veins, Nerves, and Fibres, whose Ramifications are dispersed through the whole Body, and, like the curious Touches of an exquisite Pencil, express the inimitable Art of the Workman? These are so numerous, and so full of Variety, that they exceed the Powers of Arithmetic, and are only known to that supreme Accountant, who *tells the Number of the Stars, and writes down all our Members in his Book.*

I SHALL only add a plain and obvious Observation, and suitable to every Capacity: Do but consider the different Aspect of the Face, that, though there are so many Millions of Men in the World, yet there are not any two exactly like one another, but, if placed together, a remarkable Difference may be discerned between them; nay, there is not so much as one Feature like another, but the Lines of them are drawn with such infinite Variety, as plainly demonstrate that they are the Effects



SERM. of an omniscient and omnipotent Being.

X. But,



II. LET us consider the exact Disposition of the Members of our Body ; and that, either for Use, Ornament, or Safety. And *first* for Use. How could the Senses be more usefully placed than in the Head ; whence (as *Tully* well observes) the Eyes, like Sentinels, may discover the most distant Bodies, and the Ears receive more easily the Impressions of Sounds, which are naturally carried upwards, and the Nostrils be affected with the more thin Exhalations, and more subtil Effluviiums of ascending Bodies ? How could the Hand be placed more conveniently for the Performance of all Manner of manual Exercises ; or the Heart, to dispense Life and Heat through the whole Body ; or the Sinks and Drains, to give less Annoyance ?

2. As for Ornament. What can be more comely, than that those Members, which are Pairs, should be placed over-right one another, of equal Size and Altitude ; and of like Colour, Figure, and Proportion ? What can be more noble than that erect Stature, which is a Signature of royal Dignity, a stately and majestic *Frame of Body* ; which is a remarkable Indication that Man is God's Vicegerent in this World, and made

made to look up to and contemplate those SERM.  
Heavens, which are to be his Habitation X.  
and Place of Abode hereafter? What can  
be more harmonious and uniform than the  
Disposition of the several Parts and Mem-  
bers of our Body, in which there is more  
Understanding and exquisite Invention, a  
more curious and accurate Proportion of  
Parts, than in the most skilful Piece of  
Architecture in the World? And there-  
fore, as the greater World was called by  
the *Greeks* *κόσμος*, and by the *Latins*, *Mun-  
dus*, from its Neatness, Elegancy, and  
Beauty; so may this lesser World, for the  
same Reasons, lay Claim to the same Title.  
But,

3. THE Disposition of the Parts of our  
Body is not more for Ornament, than  
for the Safety and the Security of the  
Whole. How could the Eye be placed  
more conveniently to direct the Hand, and  
the Hand to defend the more noble Parts?  
The Brain, which is the Principle of Life  
and Motion, and the Fountain of animal Spi-  
rits, is not only defended by several Coats,  
but by the Skull, Skin, and Hair: The  
Heart, which is the Source of the Blood,  
and the Spring of Vegetation, is compas-  
sed with Ribs, and securely placed in the  
soft Bed of the Lungs: The Eye, a ten-  
der

SERM. der Part, and a Member of exquisite Sense,

X. is secured in the Head, and defended by the Brows and Eye-lids: And generally, all those Parts of the Body, which are most liable to receive Hurt, are fixed in such Places where they may be most secure, and best defended from Danger. From whence we may conclude, that all the Members of our Body are so placed and disposed for Usefulness, Ornament, and Safety, that it is impossible for the Wit and Contrivance of Men and Angels to find out a better Position, or to mend them in any one Particular. But this will farther appear, by considering,

III. and Lastly, THE mutual Tendency of all the Members to promote the Good and Welfare of the Whole. For as the Apostle observes, *The whole Body being fitly joined together, and compacted by that which every Joint supplieth, according to the effectual Working, in the Measure of every Part, maketh Increase of the Body.* In which Words the Apostle reasons like a natural Philosopher, and expresses the mutual Dependence of one Part of the Body on another. And thus, *the Head, from which all the Body by Joints and Bands having Nourishment ministred, and knit together, increaseth; which is a brief and* summa-

Eph. iv.  
16.

Col. ii. 19.

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summary Account, not only of the sovereign Influence of the Head on the whole Body, but of the harmonious Connexion of the several Parts, and the close Conjunction and Agreement among themselves; for by those *αἰσῆς* and *σύνδεσμοι*, those several Junctures and Bands, the Body is compacted and joined together; and yet, at the same Time, by Means of these is rendered pliant and flexible. There is another excellent Passage in this inspired Author concerning the same Subject: *The Body* : Cor. 12: (saith he) *is not one Member, but many. If the Foot shall say, Because I am not the Hand, I am not of the Body; is it therefore not of the Body? And if the Ear shall say, because I am not the Eye, I am not of the Body; is it therefore not of the Body? If the whole Body were an Eye, where were the Hearing? If the Whole were Hearing, where were the Smelling? But now God hath set the Members, every one of them in the Body, as it hath pleased him, i. e. They are disposed and ranked according to his infinite Wisdom, and all the Parts and Members of the Body are suited exactly to the Service, Advantage, and Welfare of the Whole.*

I MIGHT very easily enlarge upon this Topic, it being a Subject more fit to

**SERM.** write a Volume upon, than to be discours-

**X.** ed on within the small Compass of a Sermon; I shall therefore at present satisfy myself, in giving you these few Hints, for the Improvement of your private Meditations; and conclude what I have to say, in the Words of an excellent modern Author: Who can sufficiently admire the infinite Loveliness and Perfection of the Divine Artificer, when he beholds the Variety of the Structure, the Diversity of the Workmanship of the Body of Man? When he observes the Parts and Vessels in Man of so different Kinds; when he takes Notice of the several Offices and Functions belonging to Concoction and Nutrition, and the Elaboration of the Blood and Spirits? When he views the strange Conveyances, the greater and lesser Channels and Conduits for the Liquors and Juices contained in it? When he considers how this Structure is supported with Bones, guarded and fortified with Limbs, cloathed and fashioned with Flesh, warmed and beautified with Fat, covered on the Outside with Skin, and within with Membranes and Tunicles, supplied with Spirits by the Nerves, and with Blood by the Veins and Arteries, moved by the Muscles and Tendons, and joined together

by

by Ligaments and Cartilages? Certainly, SERM.  
whoever seriously considers these Things, X.  
must needs conclude with the *Psalmist* in  
the Text, that he is *fearfully and wonder-*  
*fully made*. And then it remains only, in the

II. PLACE, to consider those Obligati-  
ons which result from hence; and what  
Effects the Contemplation of those won-  
derful Works of God ought to have upon  
every one of us.

I. LET us frequently meditate and  
contemplate upon these Works of Won-  
der. Let us consider the curious Make  
and Frame of our Bodies, and therein be-  
hold the admirable Wisdom, and stupen-  
dious Power, of the Divine Framer of  
them. To know ourselves, was the Ad-  
vice of an Oracle, and may be of great  
Use for the Government of our Lives and  
Conversations; and this holds good in Na-  
turals, as well as Morals; the Considera-  
tion of that wonderful Contexture of Parts,  
which compose our Bodies, will necessari-  
ly raise our Thoughts to the Contempla-  
tion of that Being to whom they owe their  
Original and Preservation. And therefore,  
when a pious and ingenious Person was  
asked, Which was the best Body of Di-  
vinity? He replied, *Galenus de Usu Parti-*  
*um*; his Meaning was, That there was no  
plainer



SERM. plainer Argument to convince us of the

X. Being of a God, nor more powerful Mo-

~ tive to engage us to worship and adore him, than the Consideration of those wonderful (I had almost said, miraculous) Effects, which are daily wrought within us. Why then are we so stupified and amazed, when we behold the Prodigies of the greater World? Why are we so solicitous and concerned, that we do not comprehend the Motion of the Heavens, nor understand the Cause of the Flux and Reflux of the Sea, and the Magnetism of the Earth? Why are we so surpris'd, when we behold the Convulsions of Nature? Are there not greater Wonders within us, tho' we do not take Notice of them? May not the circular Motion of the Blood and Humours, the curious Contexture of our Parts, the various Transmutation of the Chyle, the unconceivable Connexion of our Souls and Bodies, be the worthy Subjects of our Admiration? And as for those Persons whose Parts and Education render them unfit for such nice Speculations as these, it may suffice, that they take Notice of those Operations which are evident to the Sense; and that Hand with which they work, and the Foot on which they walk, may be the lasting Subjects

of their Meditations. But it will be to no SERM.  
Purpose to stand gazing upon second X.  
Causes, to contemplate the Wonders either  
of the greater or the lesser World, unless  
we are hereby led to the Consideration of  
the first Cause, the Spring and Source from  
whence all these derived their Original.  
Let us, therefore,

2. FROM the Consideration of these  
*Magnalia Dei*, wonderful Works of God,  
raise up in our Souls the bright and glo-  
rious Ideas of God's infinite Wisdom, and  
Power, and Goodness: For if there is so  
much curious Workmanship in our Bo-  
dies, which are so small a Part of the U-  
niverse, how excellent must that Being be,  
who has formed all these Things with the  
Word of his Power? What infinite Wis-  
dom in the Contrivance of this visible  
World, what infinite Power to produce  
it out of nothing, and what infinite Good-  
ness, to give so many excellent Gifts, and  
to communicate himself after so wonder-  
ful a Manner, to his poor indigent Crea-  
tures? What can be the Result of such  
Contemplations as these, but that,

3. WE express our Gratitude for all  
these Blessings, by Praise and Adoration;  
that those grateful Resentments, which are  
kindled in our Hearts, may be proclaimed  
to

SERM. to the whole World, and that God's

X. Praises may be as extensive as his Benefits

from one End of the World unto the other? Let us therefore praise the glorious Author of our Beings, for the Perfection and Integrity of our Bodies, that we enjoy the due Number, Shape, and Use of our Limbs and Senses; that there is neither a Defect nor Superfluity of Parts, but all of them are harmonious and uniform, comely and graceful; useful to ourselves, and sightly to others. And that the Commonness of these Blessings may not render us insensible of them, let us consider, what our Condition would be, should we undergo the Loss of any of these Members, and, by any calamitous Accident, be deprived of a Hand, an Eye, or a Foot; and if the Want of them would be so great a Misfortune, and of so mischievous Consequence to us; let the Use and Continuance of them fill our Hearts with Gratitude, and our Mouths with Praise and Adoration. Let us praise the Name of our God for that Health and Strength which we enjoy, for our Security from Dangers, and Preservation from Sickness and Diseases; for since our Body consists of so vast a Number, and almost infinite Variety of Parts, it is a Miracle of God's Mercy, that they are pre-  
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served for one Day in a sound Temper SERM.  
and vigorous Constitution ; and our Pre- X.

ervation is as great a Wonder as our Formation at first was. Did we but consider what a Multitude of Vessels there are in the Body, of exquisite Smalness and Fineness, and that an Obstruction or Irregularity, in any one of them, disorders the Whole ; we should readily acknowledge the transcendent Skill as well as the indulgent Kindness of our good God, to keep them in any tolerable Order. And

*Lastly*, If we find in ourselves any particular Excellencies and Perfections beyond other Men ; if we enjoy a sound Health, and an athletic Constitution ; if we have Strength of Limbs, or Beauty and Comeliness of Person ; let us return the Praise to that God, who is the Author and Giver of every good and perfect Gift : For *Thus saith the Lord, Let not the wise Man glory in his Wisdom, neither let the mighty Man glory in his Might ; let not the rich Man glory in his Riches ; but let him that glorieth, glory in this, that he understandeth and knoweth me, that I am the Lord which exercise loving Kindness, Judgment, and Righteousness in the Earth.* Much less let the Enjoyment of these Gifts of God's Bounty render other Men despicable in our Eyes, who

SERM. who either want them, or have them in

X. a less Proportion. Who was it that made  
 thee differ from another, that distinguished  
 the Rich from the Poor, the Beautiful from  
 the Deformed, the Wise from the Foolish,  
 the Honourable from the Mean, the Heal-  
 thy from the Diseased? But that God who is  
 the Author and Giver of every good Gift,  
 and has distributed these Talents in Trust,  
 to be employed to those Ends and Uses,  
 for which he gave them, to advance his  
 Honour and Glory in the World; and if  
 so, then what Reason have we to be proud  
 and puffed up with that, which is none of  
 our own, which was at first the Gift of  
 God's Bounty, and is still the Care of his  
 Providence? For *what have we which we*  
*have not received?* And therefore, unto  
 that God who is the Fountain of all Good,  
 the Spring and Source of all these Bless-  
 ings which we enjoy, let us render, as is  
 most due, all Honour, Glory, and Praise,  
 for ever and ever.

S E R M O N

## S E R M O N XI.

## GOD's Goodness and Bounty.

P S A L M cxix. 68.

*Thou art good, and doest Good;—*

**T**H E holy Penman of this Psalm, SERM.  
 who is generally thought to be XI.  
*David*, compos'd this Piece of  
 Divine Poetry by a propheticall  
 Spirit; and throughout the whole Psalm,  
 especially the latter Part of it, refers to the  
 Times of the Messiah; of whom it may  
 most properly be said, *Thou art good, and*  
*doest Good; teach me thy Statutes.* He, that  
 was God as well as Man, was the Foun-  
 tain of all *Goodness*, he was *Goodness* it-  
 self, in the Abstract; and, from this *Good-*  
*ness* of his Nature, the Communication of  
 his *Goodness* did proceed; he came into  
 the World on Purpose, and made it his  
 Business, whilst he continued here, to do  
*Good*; he went about doing *Good*; he did  
*Good*



SERM. *Good* both to the Souls and Bodies of Men;

XI. he delivered the Souls of Men from the

Guilt of Sin and Tyranny of the Devil; he attoned the Anger of their offended God, and instated them in his Favour; he delivered their Bodies from all Manner of Diseases, and therewith he disposed their Minds to receive the Divine Truths, and their Wills to comply with his Commands, in the Performance of which, their Interest and Happiness did consist. But of this I shall discourse more at large, whilst I consider,

I. WHAT Notion we have of God's *Goodness*, and wherein it doth consist.

II. How this *Goodness* is manifested towards his Creatures.

III. WHAT Inferences may justly be made from the Consideration of this Divine Attribute. And,

I. WHAT Notion we have of God's *Goodness*, and wherein it doth consist.

THAT *Goodness* in general is a Divine Attribute, is plain from hence; because all that *Goodness*, which is found scattered about in created Beings, was derived from God, as its prime Source and Fountain. This is confessed by all, and though there

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has been some Difference raised, and some SERM.  
Disputes managed about the other Attri- XI.  
butes of God, yet no Man was ever so  
hardy, as to deny the *Goodness* of God :  
All Sects and Parties, how different soever  
their Notions and Sentiments have been as  
to other Things, yet, in all Times and  
Ages, they have agreed in this Truth,  
that the first Cause of all Things, he who  
made and created this visible World, and  
adorned it with so much Beauty and  
Comeliness (as the Word *καλοῦ* signifies)  
and is *good* to all, must needs be himself  
infinitely *good*.

WE cannot own the Existence of a  
God, but we must also acknowledge his  
*Goodness*, and therefore the *Romans* set  
forth God by the Title of *Optimus Maxi-*  
*mus*, the best and the greatest ; they con-  
sidered God's *Goodness* before his Greatness,  
for infinite *Goodness* is more necessary to,  
and more straightly joined with an infinite  
Deity, than infinite Power, and infinite  
Wisdom : For we cannot conceive a God,  
unless we conceive him the highest *Good*,  
having nothing superior to himself in *Good-*  
*ness*, as he has nothing superior to himself in  
Excellency and Perfection. And therefore I  
shall not spend my Time in demonstrating  
this Attribute, or proving God to be *good* ;  
but, taking this for granted, I shall make it  
Q my

SERM. my Business to explain wherein this Goodness doth consist.

XI.

Now there is in God, *first*, a Goodness of Essence, or a Perfection of Nature; so that, when we say God is a Being infinitely good, we mean, that there are in God all those Excellencies which constitute and make up the Perfection of his Nature.

2. THERE is in God a moral Goodness, whereby is denoted the Rectitude of his Nature, that he is pure and holy, and free from all moral Impurity and Taint. Of both these Sorts of Goodness God is the Fountain and Original, from whom all created Goodness is derived; and the Rule and Measure, in Conformity to whom it is to be estimated; but neither of these is that Goodness principally spoken of in the Text, in which the Goodness of God is taken,

3. IN a more restrained and particular Sense, and denotes that Inclination of the Divine Will towards his Creatures, whereby he is always ready and disposed to do them Good, and to promote their true Interest and Happiness. In this Sense God is good, and doth Good; he is always opening his Hand, and filling the Earth with his Goodness.

BUT that we may have a more full and lasting Notion of the Goodness of God, and that



that it may make a deeper Impression upon our Minds and Consciences, I shall consider, *First*, the Properties of this Goodness: *Secondly*, The Effects of it, or the different Ways by which God manifests it towards his Creatures. And, *First*, I shall consider the Properties of God's Goodness: SERM. XI.

I. IN the *first* Place God is freely good, for, though God is necessarily good with Respect to his Nature, yet he is freely good with Regard to the Effluxes of it, on this or that particular Subject; he communicates this Goodness after what Manner, and in what Measure he pleases; in some Ages of the World more plentifully than in others, and some of his Creatures drink more deep of his Bounty than the rest of the Creation.

It is true, that God cannot do any Thing contrary to the essential Properties of his Nature; he cannot do any Thing which is evil, or unjust, whatsoever he doth is good; but he may chuse or refuse to do any particular good Thing; and from hence it is, that all the good Things we receive of God are the Gifts of his Bounty, because God gives them to us freely, and it is owing meerly to his good Pleasure that we enjoy and continue in the Possession of them. He acts according to

SERM. the Determination of his own Will, tho'  
 XI. his Will is always guided by the Wisdom  
 of his Mind, and regulated by the Holiness  
 of his Nature.

2. GOD'S *Goodness and Bounty* to us is perpetual; he is always doing *Good* to us, and never leaves or forsakes any Man, till he withdraws himself from God, and by his Disobedience has rendered himself incapable of his Favours; he continues to do us *Good* all the Days of our Life, and goes on to load us with his Favours from the Moment of our Birth, till the Time of our Death. His *Goodness* endures for ever, as the *Psalmist* informs us; it diffused itself in all the Ages of the World, and bears us Company through all the Stages of our Lives, and will never leave a truly good Man, till it brings him to a State of endless Glory and Happiness. *Praise ye the Lord, O give Thanks unto the Lord, for he is good, for his Mercy endureth for ever. The Mercy of the Lord is from everlasting to everlasting upon them that fear him: And his Righteousness unto Childrens Children.* And, in this Regard, God's *Goodness* differs from Man's; Men are most *good* to us in Prosperity, and forsake us in Adversity; but God doth us most *Good* when we have most Occasion for it, and want it most.

Pf. ciii.  
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3. THE

3. **THE Goodness** of God is comprehen- SERM.  
five; he doth *Good* to all his Creatures, of XI.  
what Rank or Degree soever they are; he  
openeth his Hand, and satisfieth the De-  
fire of every living Thing: He furnisheth  
them with all Manner of *good* Things, sui-  
table to all their Necessities; he fills rational  
Creatures with Understanding, sensitive  
Nature with Vigour and Motion, and the  
whole World with Beauty and Sweetness.  
*Goodness and Bounty*, in the proper No-  
tion of it, implies Diffusiveness; for *Good-  
ness* is nothing else but a strong Inclination  
to do *Good*, and, the more *Good* any Being  
doth, the more excellent it is. The most  
excellent Bodies are those which are most  
communicative, and act at the greatest  
Distance, like the Sun, which sends out  
its Light and Heat, and thereby cherish-  
eth the whole Earth.

AND as God is the most excellent Be-  
ing, so he is the most ready to commu-  
nicate himself, and to diffuse his *Goodness*  
over the whole Creation. He created this  
visible World, on Purpose that he might  
impart his *Goodness* to something without  
him, and furnished it with several Sorts of  
Creatures, that they might be capable of  
various and distinct Measures of his Libe-  
rality, according to their distinct Capac-  
ties;



SERM. ties; but the richest of his Gifts he be-

**XI.** stowed upon the rational Nature, because  
 it was furnished with an Understanding ca-  
 pable of knowing him, and a Will to close  
 with and obey him; and therefore the A-  
 postle calls this *Love and Bounty* of God  
 towards Mankind by a particular Name,  
*omphilia*; in which Place the Apostle dis-  
 courses of the Excellency of this *Love*: But  
 after that the Kindness and Love of God  
 our Saviour towards Man appeared, not by  
 Works of Righteousness which we have done,  
 but according to his Mercy he saved us, by the  
 Washing of Regeneration, and Renewing of  
 the Holy Ghost; which he shed on us abun-  
 dantly, through Jesus Christ our Saviour,  
 that being justified by his Grace, we should  
 be made Heirs according to the Hope of e-  
 ternal Life.

BUT tho' God's *Bounty* is in a won-  
 derful Manner extended unto all Men, yet  
 is his Kindness in a more particular Man-  
 ner exerted on the Good and Virtuous, those  
 whom Likeness has endeared to him, and  
 his Image, wrought upon their Souls, ren-  
 dered acceptable in his Sight; God is good  
 to Israel, but more particularly to such as  
 are of a clean Heart. He is much more  
 bountiful to the Righteous than the Wick-  
 ed, and bestows the greater Portion of his  
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Goods upon these dutiful Children, and enriches them with spiritual, if not temporal Gifts; he continues to do *Good* unto them, and crowns them, at last, with a full and compleat Fruition of Happiness; whereas he deals after a contrary Manner with the Wicked, utterly consuming those with the Sword of his Justice, who would not be wrought upon by his loving Kindness and Mercy.

SERM.  
XI.

4. GOD exercises his *Goodness* towards us with Pleasure and Delight. He is most delighted, when most diffusive, and his Pleasure, in bestowing, is greater than that of his Creatures in possessing; his own Happiness cannot be diminished, and therefore he cannot be affected with such a Narrowness of Mind, as either to court or envy the Happiness of his Creatures. No, such Thoughts as these must needs be unworthy of God, which do not become any good Man.

HE is then only said to repent, when Men do not answer the Obligations and Ends of his *Goodness*, which would conduce to their own Happiness as well as his Glory. It is greater Pleasure to him to yield to the Importunities of his Creatures, and to satisfy their longing Souls with his *Goodness*, than it is to a Mother to reach out her Breast to her crying and longing Infant. He is not wearied with the fre-

SERM. quent Sollicitations of his Servants, or tir-

XI. od with the Length of their Prayers, be-  
 cause he is pleased with bestowing his Fa-  
 vours, and imparting his own *Goodness*,  
 and answering their Petitions. A tyranni-  
 cal Prince doth not take so much Delight,  
 in oppressing those who are under him,  
 as God doth in enlarging his Hand to-  
 wards them; nor is such an one so much  
 tired with the Petitions of importunate  
 Suiters, as God is pleased with the Pray-  
 ers and Requests of an humble Supplicant.  
 When he first created the World, he sur-  
 veyed it and pronounced it *good*, and here-  
 in declared his own Joy and Satisfaction in  
 it; and thus, when he multiplies the Ef-  
 fects of his *Goodness*, he beholds them with  
 the same Self-complacency and Delight.  
 And therefore, when *Moses* desired to see  
 God's Glory, he tells him, he should see  
 his *Goodness*; intimating hereby, that there  
 is no Attribute he so much glories in, as in  
 his *Goodness*.

Exod.

xxxiii. 18.

19.

BUT that we may take a more distinct  
 View of this darling Attribute (if we may  
 so call it) let us consider, in the next Place,

II. WHAT the visible Effects or Ma-  
 nifestations of God's *Goodness* have been in  
 the World. And the chief of these are  
 his Creating, Governing, and Redeeming  
 of it. And,

I. THE



I. THE great and wonderful Goodness SERM.  
of God doth appear in the Creation of the XI.

World; this was the only Motive that induced him to raise this stupendious Fabric, and to fill it with Inhabitants, and to adorn it with all those admirable Beauties and Perfections which we behold in it; that he might impart some of those Goods which he enjoyed, and to make his Creatures Partakers with him in Glory and Happiness. This even the Heathens themselves were sensible of, and therefore one of them tells us, that, when God first set upon the Creation of the World, he transformed himself into Love and Goodness. For God was infinitely happy in the Enjoyment of himself from all Eternity, he abounded in his own Blessedness, and was incomprehensibly rich in the Possession of an unstained Felicity; and therefore he had no Need of the Service of any of his Creatures; he did not create them to enrich himself, or to make any Addition to his own Happiness, but only to impart Happiness unto them.

AND in Truth, if we fix our Thoughts upon the stupendious Fabric of the Universe, or any particular Part of it, we shall find, that it is filled with the Goodness and Bounty

SERM. *Bounty of God*; and that God's Power is

XI. not more evidently seen in creating it out of nothing, nor his Wisdom in contriving it after so curious and admirable a Manner, than his *Goodness* is, in bestowing upon every Part of it such Gifts and Properties, as conduce to their Satisfaction and Happiness, and the perfecting their Beings according to that Rank and Station they bear in the World. And though God's *Goodness* is not diffused upon all alike, but some Parts partake more plentifully of his Munificence than others; Yet is there no Creature so contemptible, but will afford a large Field to contemplate, admire, and set forth the *Bounty and Goodness* of our great Benefactor. The least Fly is a Subject, which might entertain our Thoughts for many Ages, and yet we should still find it unexhausted; could we but turn our Eyes inward, and behold our own Make and Frame, we must needs stand amazed at the abundant *Bounty and Goodness* of God towards us.

If we consider our Bodies which were formed out of the Dust of the Earth, we shall find them cast in so curious a Mould, and wrought with such exquisite Workmanship, that the *Psalmist* might well cry out, that he was *fearfully and wonder-*  
fully

## God's Goodness and Bounty.

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fully made; for in them we may discover SERM.  
such Variety of Members in such a due XI.  
Proportion, so excellent for Use, so beautiful to Sight, so powerful for Strength, that they may deservedly raise our Wonder and Amazement. It hath Eyes to conduct its Motion, Ears to let in the Pleasure of Sounds, and to convey the Intelligence of the Affairs of the World, and the Counsels of Heaven, to a more noble Mind: It hath a Tongue to express and sound forth what the learned Inhabitant of it thinks; and Hands to act what the inward Counsellor directs, and Feet to support the Fabric: It is tempered with a kindly Heat, and oily Moisture for Motion, and endowed with Conveniences for Air to qualify the Fury of the Heat, and Nourishment to supply the Decays of Nature. In short, it is a Cabinet fitted by Divine Goodness for the inclosing a rich Jewel, a Palace made of Dust to lodge in it the Viceroy of the World: Consider every Particle of it, the Situation and Proportion of every Member, the Usefulness of every Limb and String to the Service of the Soul, and it must needs raise in your Mind the amazing Ideas of God's wonderful Goodness to Mankind.

BUT



SERM.

BUT what are these Manifestations of

XI.

God's *Goodness* discovered in our Bodies,

if compared with those which display themselves in our Souls; these glorious Beings, endowed with Clearness of Understanding, and Freedom of Will; Faculties which were no sooner formed, but they were able to produce the Operations they were intended for; Beings which are able to comprehend the whole World, to discover the Nature of other Creatures, and to manage and conduct their Motions. In the Ruins of a Palace we may see the Variety displayed, and the Cost expended in the Building of it; and, in the Ruins of this fallen Structure, we still find it capable of a mighty Knowledge, a Reason able to regulate Affairs, govern States, find out witty Inventions; there is still an Understanding to irradiate the other Faculties, a Mind to contemplate its Creator, a Judgment to discern the Difference between Virtue and Vice, Good and Evil, which the *Goodness* of God has not granted to any lower Creature. These excellent Faculties, together with the Power of Self-reflexion, and the Swiftneſs of the Mind in running over the Wonders of the Creation, are astonishing Gleams of the vast *Goodness* of that Divine Hand which ennobled

robled this Frame. Ages of Contempla- SERM.  
 tion might be spent upon this Subject, XI.  
 and therefore I have now only given you  
 a few Hints.

2. BUT as God's Goodness is visible in  
 the Creation, so is it also in the Govern-  
 ment of the World, and providing for  
 those Creatures to whom he has given Be-  
 ing: He furnishes Sustainence for their Bo-  
 dies, preserving them from Dangers, and  
 assisting them in the Attainment of those  
 Ends for which they were created: O Lord,  
 says the Psalmist, *Thou preservest Man and* Ps. xxxvi.  
*Beast.* God spreads his Wings over the  
 whole Creation, and neglects nothing where-  
 in he sees the Marks of his own creating  
 Goodness; he visits Man every Day, and  
 makes him feel the Effects of his over-  
 ruling Providence, in giving him fruitful  
 Seasons, and filling his Heart with Food and  
 Gladness; he crowns the Year with his Good-  
 ness, and his Paths drop Fatness; the lit-  
 tle Hills rejoice on every Side; the Pastures  
 are cloathed with Flocks, and the Vallies are  
 covered over with Corn. He is the Strength  
 of our Life, continuing Vigour to our  
 Limbs, and Health to our Bodies; he  
 secures us from Terrors by Night, and the  
 Arrows of Diseases that fly by Day; and  
 sets a Hedge about our Estates, and defends  
 them

SERM. them against the Attempts of Rapine and

XI. Violence. He preserves our Houses from

the Flames which might consume them, and our Persons from the Dangers which lie in wait for them; he watches us in our Goings out and Comings in, delivers us from a thousand Dangers we know nothing of, and employs the most glorious Creatures in Heaven in the Service of mean Men. How often is he found a present Help in Time of Trouble? How often doth the Light of his Countenance shine in upon the good Man, and dissipates the Darkness and Gloominess which overshadows him? When all other Helps fail, he flees to us beyond our Expectations, and raises us upon a sudden from the Pit of our Dejectedness, as well as that of our Danger; and goes beyond our Desires, as well as our Deserts. How often, in a Time of Confusion, doth he preserve the good Man from the Attacks of his Enemies, and snatches him, like a Fire-brand, from the Midst of the Fire, whilst the Rage falls round about him? Nay, the Wicked, as well as the Virtuous, are Partakers of God's Goodness; he makes his Sun to rise on the Evil and on the Good, and sends Rain on the Fields of the Just and the Unjust alike; God distributes his Blessings on those who

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provoke him to shoot his Thunders; he SERM.  
darts his Light on those who deserve eter- XI.  
nal Darkness, and presents the good Things

of the Earth, to those who merit the never ending Miseries of Hell. The Ingratitude of Men stops not his *Bounty*, nor tires his liberal Hand; his *Goodness* is the more admirable, by how much the more the Unthankfulness of Men is provoking; nay, sometimes he affords to the Worst of Men the greatest Portion of the World's Goods; they often swim with Wealth, whilst others pine away their Lives in Poverty; and the Silk-worm yields its Bowels to make Purple for Tyrants, whilst the Oppressed have scarce Wool from the Sheep to cover their Nakedness. But,

3. *God's Goodness* is chiefly and principally seen in the great Work of Man's Redemption. *God so loved the World, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting Life.* This is such a Miracle of Love and Mercy, as infinitely transcends our Comprehension, as well as Deserts; that the great God of Heaven, who humbles himself, to look down upon the Children of Men, should be willing to be reconciled to his rebellious Creatures; that he who passed by the fallen Angels, and suf-

SERM. suffered them to perish, should yet take

XI. *Pity of lost Man, and make him the Overtures of Pardon and Forgiveness, when he had made himself a Slave to these Creatures over whom he was appointed Lord, subjected himself as a Servant to his Inferior, and by Sin rendered himself a Child of the Devil, and Enemy of God.*

WAS it not then a mighty *Goodness*, that could surmount these high Provocations, and give us the Means of raising ourselves out of this miserable Condition? Had we been possessed of the highest Holiness, a Reward had been the natural Effect of *Goodness*, his Grace would have crowned that Virtue which was so agreeable to him; but to be kind to an Enemy, to run counter to the Vastness of Demerit in Man, was a superlative *Goodness*; a *Goodness* triumphing above all the Provocations of Men and Pleas of Justice.

BUT the *Goodness* of God will be much more amazing, and surprise us more, when we consider, that God was not only willing to be reconciled to us, he did not only hold his Arms open to us, to receive us after we had rebelled against him, but it was his *Goodness* that found the Way to make up the Breach between us; nay, he sacrificed

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sacrificed his only begotten Son, in whom SERM.  
 he was *well pleased*; the Son of his Love; **XI.**  
 he gave him out of his Bosom to die for  
 us, and to atone for our Sins and Offences:  
 He gave him up to *Death, even the Death*  
*of the Cross*, that painful and ignominious  
 Death, that we might not die everlasting-  
 ly. This is Love, that infinitely transcends  
 all human Affection; a Miracle of Kind-  
 ness, which even the Angels desire to  
 pry into, which those glorious and exalted  
 Spirits admire, but cannot comprehend:  
 That a Man should lay down his Life for  
 his Friend, is the highest Pitch of human  
 Love: Some such Instances there have  
 been in the World, tho' very rare:  
 But *herein is the Love of God, in Christ,*  
*manifested to us*, that, while we were yet  
 Sinners, *God sent his Son*, out of his Bo-  
 som, to die for us. The wonderful Love  
 of God to Mankind, in the Work of  
 Man's Redemption, is a Theme of such  
 large Extent, that our Lives ought to be  
 spent in admiring and meditating upon it,  
 and rendering unto God the Praise due un-  
 to his holy Name. I shall therefore  
 leave it to your private Meditations; and  
 proceed,

R

III. and



SERM.

III. and Lastly, To make some Inferences from what has been said, and so conclude. And,

XI.

I. If God is thus infinitely good to us, then, from hence, we may infer what mighty Obligations lie upon us to Gratitude and Thankfulness. For how can we consider the Love and Mercy of God, in the Redemption of the World, by *Jesus Christ*; the wonderful Contrivances of Providence, both to secure the Divine Justice and Honour, and, at the same Time, to give Pardon to sinful Man; and not be wound up to an holy Extasy of Love and Admiration? Can we consider the most wise Methods whereby God brought this wonderful Design to Perfection, and trace the Footsteps of it thro' all Ages? Can we think upon the Majesty of him who condescended to suffer for us, and the Unworthiness of Man to receive so great a Favour, without filling our Understandings with awful and reverend Conceptions of him; our Will with a passionate Desire of Union with him; and engaging all the Faculties of our Souls, to approach his Presence and receive his Influence?

2. THE Consideration of God's Good-  
ness may administer Comfort to us under

SEAM.  
XI.

all our Afflictions, of what Kind soever.

A good God will deliver us out of all our  
Troubles, if we put our Trust in him; he  
is more ready to give than we are either  
to desire, or deserve: God's Eyes are

Ps. xxxiv.

upon the Righteous, and his Ears are open

15.

unto their Cry. Let us consider how often  
he has multiplied his Blessings, when we  
did deserve his Anger; how he has sent  
one unexpected Benefit on the Heels of  
another, to bring, with a swift Pace, the  
Tidings of good Will to us. How often  
has he delivered us from a Disease which  
had the Arrows of Death in its Hand,  
ready to pierce us through? How often  
has he turned our Fears into Joys, and  
made our Calamities the Occasions of pro-  
moting our Felicity? How often has he  
enabled us to subdue a Temptation, and  
sent seasonable Supplies in the Midst of a  
sore Disease? And let the Consideration  
of God's Goodness towards us make us  
still depend upon him, that he, who has  
hitherto delivered us, will still continue to  
protect and defend us, and upon this  
Rock of Ages we shall dwell in Safety.

R 2

3. If

SERM. 3. If God is thus *good*, then no Man

XI. has Reason to despair, or to say within himself, that he shall not be able to withstand the Temptations of the Devil, or to persevere in a holy and religious Course of Life. If God is a Being of infinite Goodness and Mercy, who desires the Happiness of all his Creatures, and has made Use of the most proper and reasonable Means to make them so; we have Reason to believe that he is ready to pardon our Sins, and to blot out our Offences, when we return unto him by Repentance; that he will assist us, by his Grace, to perform whatsoever he requires of us; and that he, who has given us his only begotten Son, in whom he is well pleased, will *with him, give us all Things.*

4. HENCE we may learn to imitate God's *Goodness*, and endeavour to resemble our heavenly Father, both in being and doing *Good*. The Perfection of our Nature doth consist in our Likeness to God: And in what Perfection can we resemble him, but his Holiness and Goodness? His Wisdom and Power are the Objects of our Admiration, but are infinitely removed from our finite Capacities; but he stoops his *Goodness* to our daily View, and encourages our



courages our Pursuits after it. Let us SERM.  
 therefore endeavour to transcribe this XI.  
 glorious Attribute of *God's Goodness*, in all  
 our Words and Actions, through the whole  
 Course of our Lives. Let us imitate it in  
 the first Notion of it, as that signifies the  
 Holiness and Rectitude of his Nature. Let  
 us purify our Minds, and furnish them  
 with every good Grace and heavenly  
 Quality, being holy, as God is holy; just,  
 as he is just; merciful, as he is merciful,  
 in Kind, if not in Degree: Let us make  
 his Word the Rule of our Lives, and  
 live up to the Dignity of our Natures,  
 according to the Laws of sanctified Rea-  
 son, wherein our true Interest and Happi-  
 ness doth consist. And let us not only be  
 good to ourselves, but let us make it  
 our Business to do *Good* to others, con-  
 sidering, that, if God so freely loved us,  
 how much more Reason have we to love  
 one another? For there is no Man in the  
 World can be so ungrateful to us, as we  
 have been to God; no one can be so un-  
 fit to receive a Kindness from us, as the  
 best Man in the World is, to deserve any  
 Favour from God. Alas! the Debts we  
 owe to one another are but a few Mites,  
 but our Sins and Offences against God are

SERM. innumerable. Let us therefore imitate

**XI.** our heavenly Father, both in the Intensity and Extensiveness of our Charity; doing all the Good we can, wherever we have Opportunity; not only to Friends (those who do Good to us) but to our most inveterate Enemies; remembering that our blessed Saviour laid down his Life for us, when we were Enemies to him: And let us beseech him, since he is so good, in his own Nature, and so desirous of doing us Good, that he would teach us his Statutes, and enable us to obey them.

SERMON

## S E R M O N XII.

GOD is slow to Anger, and terrible  
in Judgment.

## N A H U M i. 3.

The Lord is slow to Anger, and great  
in Power, and will not at all acquit  
the Wicked: The Lord hath his Way  
in the Whirlwind, and in the Storm,  
and the Clouds are the Dust of his Feet.

**T**HE Words, at the first Sight, SERM.  
seem to be a Poetical Descrip- XII.  
tion of the Judgments of God,  
and his Dealings with Mankind;  
in which God is described like the General  
of an Army, who marches out with a  
numerous Host, to take Vengeance of  
his Enemies, with the Sound of the  
Clashing of Arms and Neighing of Horses,  
and a confused Noise like a Whirlwind  
and a Storm, and raises up Clouds of  
Dust



SERM. Dust with his Feet. Such Descriptions  
 XII. as these are familiar in the Writings of  
 the *Prophets*, which are generally penned  
 in a Poetical Stile; that hereby they  
 might form the more lively Images of  
 Things, and make the deeper Impression  
 in the Minds of their Hearers.

THEY were the Words of *Nabum*, a  
*Prophet* of the Lord, who prophesied  
 concerning *Nineveh*, the Metropolis of  
*Assyria*; the Time of the penning this  
 Prophecy is uncertain, but 'tis generally  
 concluded by Interpreters, that it was  
 after the Preaching of *Jonah*; for tho'  
 the *Ninevites*, on the Preaching of *Jonah*,  
 put on Sackcloth, and proclaimed a Fast;  
 and made an outward Shew of sincere  
 and hearty Repentance; and perhaps, for  
 a Time, were really affected with a Sense  
 of their Sins, which provoked God utter-  
 ly to threaten to destroy their City and  
 Nation; yet this good Temper of Mind  
 did not last long; as soon as ever God had  
 removed his Judgments, and the Rod was  
 taken out of Sight, they returned to their  
 former evil Ways, and committed Sin  
 with greater Greediness than they did be-  
 fore. And yet, for all this, God did not  
 presently execute his Vengeance upon  
 them, and utterly destroy them with his  
 Judgments;

Judgments; but he still continues to be SERM.  
 gracious to them; he sends them Prophet XII.  
 after Prophet, gives them Exhortation  
 after Exhortation; he intreats, be-  
 seeches, threatens, uses all the Means  
 imaginable, to work upon a stubborn  
 and perverse People. He never proceeds  
 to Judgment, that *strange Work*,  
 till Men have defeated all the Over-  
 tures of his Mercy, and all the Means  
 made Use of for their Amendment have  
 proved ineffectual: For God is *slow to*  
*Anger, and great in Power, and will*  
*not at all acquit the Wicked: The Lord*  
*bathe his Way in the Whirlwind, and in the*  
*Storm, and the Clouds are Dust of his*  
*Feet.*

FROM which Words we may learn  
 these plain Lessons:

- I. THE Goodness and Mercifulness of  
 God: For *the Lord is slow to An-*  
*ger.*
- II. THAT this Mercifulness and Long-  
 suffering, doth not proceed from any  
 Impotency or Weakness in God: For,  
 as he is *slow to Anger*, so he is also  
*great in Power.*
- III. THAT God will exercise and exert  
 this Power on wicked and ungodly  
 Men,

SERM.  
XII.

Men, when all other Means prove ineffectual for their Amendment: For he will not at all acquit the Wicked.

IV. THE Manner of God's exercising this Power, and of his coming to judge a wicked Nation and People; it will be in the most terrible and dreadful Manner imaginable: *The Lord bath his Way in the Whirlwind, and in the Storm, and the Clouds are the Dust of his Feet.*

I. FROM hence we may learn the Goodness and Mercifulness of God: *The Lord is slow to Anger*; which imports these following Truths:

1. THAT the original Design of God's creating Mankind was to make them happy, and do them Good. For God was all-sufficient in himself, and had no Need of the Service of any of his Creatures, nor had he any other Motive to create them, but the Goodness of his Nature, which induced him to communicate that Happiness, which he enjoyed, to all Manner of Beings, according to their different Capacities; that, by living according to the Rule and Nature of their Beings, they might attain the End for which they were at first created. And, to enable them thus to do,

2. God



*and terrible in Judgment.*

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2. God performed all that was needful SERM.  
and requisite on his Part; and gave to XII.  
all Manner of Beings such Faculties,  
Passions, and Powers of acting, as were  
proper for the obtaining their different  
Ends. To inanimate Creatures he gave  
necessary Laws of Motion; to sensitive  
Beings, Sense and Instinct; to rational  
Beings, Freedom of Will, and Reason to  
rule and govern it; that so every Rank of  
Beings might move regularly and orderly  
in their proper Sphere, and conduce to  
the Preservation, Beauty, and Happiness  
of the Universe. Thus God created this  
great Machine of the World, in a comely  
Order and due Proportion: And,

3. To the Stubbornness and Perverse-  
ness of Man's Will only it is owing, that,  
whilst all other inferior Beings keep that  
Order and due Decorum, in which they  
were at first created, rational Beings,  
alone, degenerated from the Excellency of  
their Original; and Mankind, who was  
created little lower than the Angels, taking  
no Warning by the Fall of the apostate  
Spirits, transgressed that easy and good Law  
which God had given him, and hereby  
rendered himself more vile than the Beasts  
that perish. The apostate Angels God  
left in a miserable and deplorable Estate,  
with-

SERM. without any Hopes of Recovery, or  
 XII. Means of obtaining Pardon or Forgiveness; but,

4. To lost Man God still continued to be good and gracious; he indulged him in that wonderful Privilege of second Thoughts, and put him in a Condition of regaining his former Estate, by sending his only begotten Son, out of his Bosom, to atone for Man's Transgression; and, by purifying our Minds, and bettering our Natures, to render us capable of Pardon and Forgiveness. A wonderful Instance of God's loving Kindness and Mercy towards us, if we duly and seriously consider it! Nor is this all, for God has not only put us into a Capacity of being still happy, but he makes Use of all the Means, and uses all the Methods, which are proper to make us so; he informs our Judgments with the Knowledge of the most excellent Truths, and, to the Original Text of the Book of Nature, he has added the plain Comment of the Written Word; he has moved our Wills by the most excellent Motives, and incited our Powers of Action, by proposing the most excellent Rewards on the one Hand, and the most exquisite Punishments on the other. And because vain  
 Man

Man might be apt to say, that all this is SERM.  
 to no Purpose, because his Nature is so XII.

depraved, that he has no Power and Ability to perform what God requires of him; he has therefore given to every one such Measures of his Grace, and has promised such Assistances of his Holy Spirit, that, tho' we can do *nothing of ourselves*, yet we can do *all Things through Christ who strengthens us*; and it will be our own Fault, and through our egregious Folly and Laziness, if we perish everlastingly. Nay,

5. THO' we frequently abuse God's Grace, and lose the Efficacy of it, by neglecting to make Use of it; though we grieve God's Holy Spirit; yet God continues to do us Good; he gives us *Line upon Line*, and *Precept upon Precept*; he doth not presently give us over, and leave us to ourselves; but he speaks to us in divers Ways and sundry Manners; sometimes by the Preaching of his Word, exhorting, intreating, and beseeching us to mend our Lives; sometimes by the Voice of Affliction, casting us down upon the Bed of Sickness, taking away our Health, our Estates, our Children, or, by some other grievous Calamity, taking our Minds off from sensitive Objects, and the Pleasures  
 of



SERM. of this Life, and hereby bringing us to  
 XII. serious Thoughts, and a true Sense of our  
 Condition. Nay, he never wholly leaves  
 us and forsakes us, but, as long as we con-  
 tinue in this Life, his Holy Spirit strives  
 with us, and endeavours to overcome our  
 Hardness, Impenitency, and Ingratitude;  
 by his Mercies persuading and intreat-  
 ing us, to leave our evil Courses, and to  
 turn unto our gracious and merciful Fa-  
 ther; by his Judgments deterring us from  
 our Sins, and threatening our utter Ruin and  
 Confusion, if we persevere in them; and,  
 by all these Means and Methods, makes  
 it plainly appear, that our God is an in-  
 finitely good and merciful Being, and, as  
 he is described in the Text, that he is  
*slow to Anger*; which is the first Propo-  
 sition I proposed to insist upon: And this  
 brings me to prove,

II. THAT this Goodness, Merciful-  
 ness, and Long-suffering of God doth  
 not proceed from any Impotency or  
 Weakness in God; for God is infinitely  
 powerful as well as infinitely good. The  
 Text tells us, as he is *slow to Anger*, so  
 is he *great in Power*. The Reason why  
 those Men, who are our Enemies, do not  
 injure and hurt us, is, for the most Part,  
 because it is not in their Power so to do;  
 God

God restrains wicked Men and Devils SERM.  
from wracking their utmost Spight and XII.  
Malice upon us, and frequently protects  
us from all their evil Designs; but no-  
thing can restrain God from inflicting on  
us the just Punishment of our evil Deeds,  
but only the Goodness and Mercifulness of  
his own Nature; who is long-suffering to  
us-ward, not willing that any should perish,  
but that all should obtain Mercy. He  
knows every Thought of our Hearts, he  
writes them down in his Book; there is  
no Possibility of escaping from his Sight,  
or rescuing ourselves from his Arm, who  
will not only call us to an Account for  
every idle Word, but either reward or  
punish them in another Life. So foolish  
and unreasonable are the vain Fancies of  
those wicked Men, who imagine, either  
that God's Knowledge is limited, that he  
doth not take Notice of the Transactions  
of this World, who knows even our  
*Thoughts afar off*: Or, that his *Hand* is  
*shortened*, that he *cannot* punish evil Doers;  
that he who made them, at first, cannot  
unmake them again, or make them for  
ever miserable. Whereas, in every Page,  
almost, of the Holy Writ, it is laid down,  
as a fundamental Rule and Maxim of  
unquestionable Certainty,

III. THAT

SERM.

III. THAT God will exercise and exercise

XII.

this infinite Power, in the Punishment of wicked and ungodly Men, if all other Means prove ineffectual for their Amendment and Reformation. *The Lord will not acquit the Wicked, i. e.* he will not permit those, who continue in their Wickedness, to go unpunished; but they shall certainly suffer the just Demerit of their evil Deeds, either in this World or the next. Nay, I had almost said, the Lord cannot pardon the impenitent Offender, whilst he continues impenitent; it is true, God's Mercies are wonderful, and his *Ways past finding out*; but this I am very well assured of, that there is not any Word, or the least Syllable in the Holy Bible which intimates, to us, any other Means of Salvation, but through the Merits and Sufferings of the blessed *Jesus*; nor is there any other Way of obtaining a Share in this Ransom, or receiving Benefit of the Death and Sufferings of our crucified Saviour, but by Faith, Repentance, and Obedience, *i. e.* the Believing what he has done for us, Repenting of our former evil Courses, and Leading our Lives suitably to the Laws of his holy Gospel, and Imitating, as far as is possible, his holy Example. If we do otherwise, we may cry,

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cry, *Lord, Lord*, long enough, make SERM.  
 Profession of his Doctrine, and wear his XII.  
 Badge and Livery, and call ourselves  
 Christians; but he will bid us *depart from*  
 him, *i. e.* utterly refuse and reject us,  
 because we are Workers of Iniquity.  
 The Wicked shall as certainly be punish-  
 ed, as the Righteous shall receive their  
 promised Reward. For God is of *purser*  
*Eyes than to behold Iniquity*; either to be-  
 hold it, so as to allow of it; or, to suffer  
 it to escape without its due Punishment.  
 The Holiness and Purity of his Nature is  
 such, that it makes all Sin and Wickedness  
 detestable to him, and odious in his Sight.  
 So that, even from the Goodness of God's  
 Nature, every impenitent Sinner may  
 certainly conclude, that a holy and good  
 God must needs hate, and by Conse-  
 quence punish every impure and wicked  
 Wretch, who goes on in the wilful and  
 obstinate Violation of his holy Laws:  
 And if so, then this will lead us to con-  
 sider,

IV. *and Lastly*, THE Manner of God's  
 exercising this Power, and of his coming  
 to judge a wicked Man, or a wicked and  
 ungodly Nation and People; it will be  
 in the most terrible and dreadful Man-  
 ner imaginable; as it is described in the  
 S latter

SERM. latter Part of my Text, *The Lord hath his Way in the Whirlwind, and in the Storm, and the Clouds are the Dust of his Feet.* *Laesa patientia fit furor*, the more Patience and Forbearance he hath shewed towards the Sinner, before the Inflicting of the Punishment, the more terrible and affrighting will the Punishment be, when it comes to fall upon him; nay, the Guilt of the Sinner will make his Fear the greater, and the Greatness of his Fear will add to his Horror and Amazement. And therefore the Coming of the Lord to a general Judgment, or to judge a particular People or Nation, is well described by a *Storm* and a *Whirlwind*, in the Text, which are of such Force and Power, that nothing is able to withstand them; so terrible, that they are sufficient to fill the stoutest Heart with Fear, and to daunt the Courage of the most hardy and valiant Warrior.

THE Judgments of God are deservedly described to us in the Holy Scripture by *Storms* and *Tempests*, on many Accounts; but more especially they bear a Resemblance to them in these following:

I. BECAUSE they overtake the Sinner unexpectedly; *the Day of the Lord cometh like*

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and terrible in Judgment.

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like a Thief in the Night; when Men are SERM.  
most secure, lulled asleep with carnal XII.  
Ease and Security, and saying with the  
rich Man in the Gospel, *Soul, Soul, take  
thy Rest, thou hast Goods laid up for many  
Years,* then doth the Lord call them to  
an Account, and say unto them, *Thou  
Fool, this Night shall thy Soul be required  
of thee.*

2. BECAUSE we have no Way to escape  
them, nor Power to resist them. For,  
*whither shall we flee from God's Pre-* Pf. cxxxix  
*sence? If we ascend up into Heaven, God* 7, &c.  
*is there; if we make our Bed in Hell,*  
*behold, he is there; if we take the Wings*  
*of the Morning, and dwell in the uttermost*  
*Parts of the Sea, even there shall his Hand*  
*lead us, and his Right-hand shall bold us. If*  
*we say, Surely the Darknes shall cover*  
*us; even the Night shall be light about*  
*us; yea, the Darknes hideth not from*  
*him, the Darknes and the Light are both*  
*alike to him. We can flee into no Part*  
*of the World, where God's Eye will not*  
*see us; nor is there any Power, which can*  
*rescue us out of his Hand.*

3. If we consider the dismal Effects  
which God's Judgments produce, they will  
appear to resemble a Storm. If they are  
spiritual Judgments, what Blindness, what



SERM. Disorder and Confusion do they introduce

XII. into our Soul? How do they ruffle and  
 discompose its Faculties, blind the Understanding, pervert the Will, and disorder the Affections, and put the whole Soul into such a Rage and Ferment, that, *like the troubled Sea*, it is continually casting up *Mire and Dirt*? If they are temporal Judgments, whether they affect the Body, Estate, or Reputation; with what Labour and Pains do we bear up under them, how uneasy and restless do they make us, and render our very Lives burthensome to us? And if so, then how much more grievous must those Punishments be, which will be inflicted on the Wicked to all Eternity? For if an acute Pain, in any one Part, if the Want of one of the Comforts of Life, brings upon our frail Bodies such Uneasiness as takes away the Comfort of our Lives, and renders our Condition wretched, burthensome, and miserable: How deplorable must that State needs be, wherein the Bodies and Souls of wicked Men shall be consigned over to eternal Torments; when every Faculty of the Soul, and every Member of the Body, shall be exposed to the Wrath of an angry God; and the Duration of Men's Torments shall be as infinite as the Intention

tion of them? How intolerable then SERM.  
 must such Judgments as these needs be, **XII.**  
 for *Tophet is ordained of old, the Pile*  
*thereof is Fire and much Wood, and the* I sa. xxx.  
*Breath of the Lord, like a Stream of Brim-* 33.  
*stone, doth kindle it; and how are we*  
*able to dwell with everlasting Burnings?*

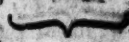
Now, if these Things are so, as certainly they are; if the Judgments of God are so terrible, so intolerable to be born, then the Consideration of them should naturally lead us into such Thoughts as these:

(1.) **WHAT** is the Cause of all the Evils which afflict Mankind? Doth not all the Evil of Punishment proceed from the Evil of Sin? God made every Thing good, but *Men have sought out many Inventions*; and, by perverting their Ways, and living in Disobedience to the Laws of God, have introduced innumerable Kinds of Evil and Calamities into the World. Not only the Earth, but all the other Elements were cursed for Man's Transgression; and by Sin not only Death entered into the World, but a vast Train, both of spiritual and bodily Maladies. As the Soul was disordered by the Violence of the Passions, the Body, by many Infirmities and Diseases; so was the Earth and Sea, by

SERM. Storms and Tempests, by Hurricanes and  
 XII. Earthquakes, by Thunderings and Light-  
 nings, by Deluges and Inundations; and  
 that universal Repose and Smile of Nature,  
 which made the whole Earth a Paradise,  
 whilst Man continued in a State of Inno-  
 cency, was thereby immediately changed  
 into Confusion and Disorder, Terror and  
 a State of War, as soon as ever he trans-  
 gressed the Bounds of his Duty.

(2.) WE should consider, for what End  
 all these Evils are sent upon us. For since  
 God doth all Things for some wise End or  
 other, nay, brings Good out of all those  
 Evils which we have brought upon our-  
 selves; let us seriously consider, what  
 good Use may be made of God's Judg-  
 ments, and how they may become bene-  
 ficial and advantageous to us. And this  
 we shall effect, *First*, If the Reflections  
 on God's Judgments make us serious and  
 thoughtful in considering our Ways; for  
 the first Step to Reformation is to know  
 that we have done amiss; the genuine  
 Effect of Affliction is to make us hearken  
 to the Voice of Reason, and to weigh  
 and consider those Motives which are  
 proposed to us. *Secondly*, If, from the  
 Consideration of our Ways, we become  
 sensible how we have done amiss, and are  
 convinced



convinced of the evil Nature of our Sins, SERM.  
 of our own Folly in committing them, XII.  
 and of the pernicious Effects of them,   
 in that, hereby, we have brought all these  
 Evils upon us. And,

(3.) We should be led to consider, which  
 are the best Means to remove these Judg-  
 ments, to appease an angry and incensed  
 God, and to render him favourable and  
 propitious to us. We should consider,  
 that, since the Design of God's Dealings  
 with Men, in this World, is to do them  
 Good, either as to their temporal or e-  
 ternal Interest, therefore the best Way  
 to prevail with God, to remove his Judg-  
 ments, is to turn to God with Fasting  
 and Prayer, and Repentance for our Sins  
 past; to offer him up the Sacrifice of a pure  
 Heart; to cleanse our Consciences from  
 dead Works; to remove out of our Souls  
 every Thing which may displease and of-  
 fend him, and to resolve to bid an eternal  
 Adieu to all our Sins and evil Courses;  
 lest, when we have washed our Souls,  
 and turned out thence one evil Spirit, it  
 should return again, and bring with it a  
 Legion more, and take Possession of our  
 Hearts; and then our *latter End* would be  
 far *worse than* our *Beginning*. Thus the  
*Ninevites* repented and turned to God, on

SERM. the Preaching of *Jonah*, and God repent-

XII. ed him of the Evil that he had denounced  
 against them: But, when they returned a-  
 gain to their evil Courses, God sent the  
 Prophet *Nabum* to denounce his Judg-  
 ments against them; and, when they  
 turned a deaf Ear to his Admonitions, and  
 were hardened yet more and more, he  
 gave them up as a Prey to their Enemies,  
 who devoured them by the Sword, de-  
 stroyed their Kingdom, and carried them  
 into Captivity; so that they who would  
 not serve their God, without any slavish  
 Fear, were brought to a Sense of their  
 Duty, by Bonds and Imprisonment, and  
 by becoming Subjects to a foreign Prince;  
 which, I pray God, may never be the  
 Condition of the Kingdoms in which we  
 live. And therefore, in order to incite in  
 you a true and serious Repentance, I shall  
 address myself to you yet more particularly.

AND now, in order to avert the Judg-  
 ments of God, let every one of us seri-  
 ously consider with himself, what Sins he  
 hath been guilty of, and how far he hath  
 contributed to fill up the Measure of a  
 National Impiety. Let him descend into the  
 Closet of his own Breast, and make a  
 diligent Search, for the accursed Thing  
 that lurks there; and let him not satisfy  
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himself, that he is not guilty of the most **SERM.**  
notorious and crying Sins of the Times; **XII.**  
but let him consider, whether there is  
no private and secret Vice, no spiritual  
Lust, which takes the Possession of his  
Heart: And, when we have made this  
diligent Search, let us bring forth these *A-*  
*malekites*, and *hew them in Pieces before*  
*the Lord.* In short, let us amend our  
Lives, and return unto the Lord, and he  
will have Mercy upon us; and to our God,  
and he will abundantly pardon. And after  
we have thus reformed ourselves (for we  
must begin at Home) then let us do our  
utmost Endeavours to promote a National  
Reformation; by endeavouring to stem  
that Current of Vice and Wickedness,  
which threatens to overflow us; by en-  
couraging Virtue, Honesty and Probity;  
by endeavouring to heal and cement  
our Divisions, and to allay our Animosi-  
ties; but more especially by endeavouring  
to be ourselves Examples in every good  
Work, by breaking off our Sins by  
Repentance, and our Iniquities by *doing*  
*Justice*, and *loving Mercy*, and *walking*  
*humbly with our God*; which that we may  
all do, God of his Mercy grant for *Jesus*  
*Christ* his Sake.



## S E R M O N XIII.

Of the Resurrection of Christ, and  
our own Resurrection.

ISAIAH xxvi. 19.

*Thy dead Men shall live, together with  
my dead Body shall they arise : awake  
and sing, ye that dwell in the Dust.*

SERM.  
XIII.

**T**HE Words are Part of the  
the Song of the Prophet *Isaiah*,  
and contain a comfortable Mes-  
sage from *Christ* to his Church;  
in the Delivery of which, the Prophet  
expresses his hasty and earnest Desire, to  
declare those good Tidings; his Breast  
swells with an holy Zeal, and every Word  
seems ambitious to break out foremost,  
and hereby his Speech and Phrase is render-  
ed broken and interrupted. *Thy dead  
Men shall live, together with my dead Body*  
shall

all they arise : awake and sing, ye that dwell in the Dust, SERM.  
XIII.

In which Words are contained,

A PROPHECY concerning our Saviour's Resurrection.

I. AN Assurance that our Bodies shall also be raised from the Dead.

II. THE Use and Improvement which ought to be made of both these Truths : That therefore we ought to honour God, by an humble and vigilant Service ; and to glorify him, with Songs of Praise and Thanksgiving : *Awake and sing, ye that dwell in the Dust.*

I. HERE is a Prophecy concerning the Death and Resurrection of our Saviour Christ. When he says, *With my dead Body all they arise*, some Interpreters are of Opinion, that the Prophet speaks of his own Body, which he foretold should arise whole and intire, though mangled and torn asunder by the Command of King Manasses. But, since the Resurrection of our blessed Saviour is the only sure Foundation of our Comfort, the only rational Argument to induce us to believe the Resurrection of our own Bodies, which, as they themselves confess, is the Design of the

SERM. the Text, I shall therefore follow the general Current of Commentators, and take

these Words for a Prophecy concerning the ample Completion of that great Miracle of the *Resurrection* of our Saviour *Christ*, which is, as it were, the *Corner-Stone*, by which the whole Christian Religion is supported, and the Basis upon which it rests.

AND, that I may fix this Truth more firmly upon your Minds, I shall consider,

*First, THE Truth.*

*Secondly, THE Power. And,*

*Thirdly, THE Glory of our Saviour's Resurrection.*

I. CONSIDER the *Truth* and Certainty of our Saviour's *Resurrection*. How plainly it was foretold in the Old Testament and how punctually it was fulfilled in the New. Observe all the Circumstances. *He arose the third Day*; and this was expressly foretold, *After two Days will he revive us, and in the third Day he will raise us up, and we shall live in his Sight.* Of this *Jonah* was a Type; for as *Jonah* was three Days and three Nights in the *Whale's Belly*; so was our Saviour three

Hosea vi.  
2.

Mat. xii.  
40.

Pf. cx. 3-

*Days and three Nights in the Heart of the Earth.* This, that he was to arise in the

Morning, was also prophesied of, *The*

*Dew*



*Dew of thy Birth is of the Womb of the* SERM.

*Morning: And again, I myself will a-* XIII.

*wake early; or, as it is otherwise rendered,* Isa. lvii.

*excitabo Auroram, I will raise up the* 8.

*Morning. Which was literally accom-*

*plished, if what St. Chrysostom tells us was*

*true, that, This Day the Sun rose sooner,*

*and before his Time, and put on his most*

*glorious Apparel, and arrayed himself in*

*his brightest Lustre. He remained three*

*Days in the Grave, that all Men might be*

*assured, that he was really dead; and he*

*rose the third Day, that he might suffer*

*no Putrefaction; that so the Prophecy of*

*the Psalmist might be accomplished, thou*

*shalt not suffer thine holy One to see Cor-* Pf. xvi.

*ruption. It was foretold, that the Sinners* 11.

*in Zion should be afraid, and Fearfulness* If. xxxiii.

*should surprize the Hypocrites. And we* 14.

*read, that the Soldiers, who watched the* Mat. xxviii. 4.

*Sepulchre, were frightened and became as*

*dead Men, when they felt the Earthquake,*

*at which Time, the Earth and the Multi-* Pf. xcvi.

*tude of the Isles (as the Psalmist foretold)* 1.

*shaked as it were for Joy, because the*

*Lord was King.*

AGAINST the Certainty of this great

Miracle, we find it objected by the Jews,

that the Disciples of our Saviour Christ

came by Night, and stole his Body away, Mat. xxviii. 13.

whilst

SERM. whilst the Soldiers were asleep. And there

XIII. fore, instead of punishing the Soldiers, for the

Neglect of their Duty, they gave them Money

to countenance this Fable, and to attest

this ill-contrived Story. For what can be

more ridiculous, than to imagine, that the

whole Band of Soldiers should all fall

asleep; that none of them should be

awakened by the Rolling away of the

great Stone which lay at the Entrance of

the Sepulchre, or by the Earthquake which

happened at that Time? It is not at all

probable, that they should be so careless, so

negligent of their Duty, and buried in so deep

a Security, when, but a little while before

they were so strictly charged, so apprehensive

of being imposed upon, and that our Saviour's

Disciples would attempt to steal him away;

when they were assisted by so many Jews, who were very solicitous,

and impatiently waited the Success of this Affair.

If the Soldiers were so fast asleep, how could they tell what was done,

how could they give such an exact Account what had happened in the mean While?

How did it appear that our Saviour's Disciples stole him away?

But farther, how improbable is it, that the Disciples of the crucified Jesus should steal him away?

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these poor Wretches, dejected and cast down for the Loss of their Master, were fit Instruments to undertake so bold, so daring, so manifestly desperate an Adventure? Or, if they had attempted it, would they have made so long a Stay in performing it, as to take off the *Linen* from his Body, and the Napkin from his Head, and carefully to *fold* them up, and *lay* them apart in several Places? And yet all this was done; the Linen which was fastened to the Body, and, as it were, pitched on with *Myrrh and Aloes*, about an hundred Weight, was carefully taken off, and neatly folded up, by such Men, who carried their Lives in their Hands, and every Moment were in Dread of a Discovery; how ill do these Things hang together? How little Probability is there in this incoherent Account? If they designed to have imposed upon the World, they should have done it with greater Ingenuity. But the Prophecy of the *Psalmist* in this, as well as in all other Particulars, exactly accorded with them, *They have imagined* such a *mischievous Device*, as they are not able to go through with.

BUT that there might not be the least Doubt remaining, of this great Article of our Faith, our Saviour has given sufficient

Satis-

SERM.

XIII.

Joh. xx.

6, 7.

Chap. xix.

39.

Ps. xxi.

11.



SERM. Satisfaction to the Scruples of every rational Person, and put the Matter of Fact out of Question, by raising himself from the Dead and shewing himself frequently *alive, after his Resurrection*, to his Disciples and Followers, and continuing some Time on Earth for this very Purpose, before his Ascension; and thus by infallible Proofs demonstrated to the World the Truth of his *Resurrection*. He shewed himself to *Cleophas*, and that other Disciple, to *above five hundred Brethren at once*, and to the twelve *Apostles*; often explaining the Scriptures to them, opening their Understandings, and upbraiding their Unbelief. This, one would think, might be sufficient to settle the most doubtful Disciple, and to convince the most incredulous Unbeliever: But he descended farther still, he appealed to all their Senses, he bad them *feel and handle his Flesh and Bones*, that they might be satisfied his Body was real; he called for Meat, and eat, and drank before them; and that they might be assured it was the very same Body, which was crucified, he retained the Marks of his Passion, even the Prints and Holes which the Nails had made in his Hands and Feet, and the Spear in his Side; and these he exposed to the View

Luke  
xxiv. 18.  
1 Cor.  
xv. 6.

Luke  
xxiv. 39.  
Ver. 41,  
43.

— xxiv.  
39, 40.

of

of all the *Apostles* in general, and of *us*—SERM.  
believing *Thomas* in particular; saying, XIII.  
*Reach hither thy Finger, and behold my*  
*Hands, and reach hither thy Hand, and* <sup>Joh. xl.</sup>  
*thrust it into my Side; and be not faithless,*  
*but believing.* Well then might they bold-  
ly deliver (and we are senseless if we do  
not believe) what their Ears had heard,  
and their Eyes looked upon, and their  
Hands banded, concerning the *Resurrection*  
of our Saviour. And to close up all, well  
might they seal with their Blood the Doc-  
trine which they taught.

2. CONSIDER the *Power* of our Sa-  
viour's *Resurrection*. I mean both that  
Power by which he rose, and that Efficacy  
which went along with it, and attend-  
ed it.

(1.) THE Power by which he rose  
was his own. *I have Power to lay down* <sup>John x;</sup>  
*my Life, and I have Power to take it a-* <sup>18.</sup>  
*gain; and again, Destroy this Temple, and* <sup>John ii;</sup>  
*three Days I will raise it up.* And, in <sup>19.</sup>  
this Sense principally, he is called by St.  
Paul, *Primitiæ dormientium*, the *first Fruits*  
*of them that slept.* And then,

(2.) As for the Power which attended  
it was no less than the subduing *Prin-*  
*cipalities and Powers*, the pulling down <sup>Col. ii.</sup>  
the strong Holds of the Devil. By this <sup>15.</sup>

T

glorious

SERM. glorious and triumphant Act of our SAVIOUR, the Devil was subdued, Sin lost its  
**XIII.** Sting, the Mouth of Hell was stopped, and Death itself became a Passage to Life. These are the Fruits and Benefits of our Saviour's *Resurrection*, this seals and ratifies to us all the Blessings of his Death and Passion; for he was *delivered for our Offences*, and *rose again for our Justification*, i. e. he died for our Guilt, and rose again to acquit us. If he had not died, he had not conquered; if he had not risen again, he had not reaped the Benefits of his Victory. And therefore the Question is asked, *What Profit is there in my Blood, when I go down to the Pit?* Which is as much as if he had said, Then comes the Profit of my Sufferings, when I shall rise again. Agreeable to this is that of St. Paul, *It is Christ that died, yea rather, that is risen again.* For it is our Saviour's *Resurrection*, which is the Example and Pattern unto which ours must be conformed; and his *Resurrection* is the only sure Foundation upon which we build the Hopes and Belief of ours. For, if he be risen, we shall rise also; and, if he be not risen, our Faith is vain, and our Hope is vain: Nay, we are of all Men most miserable. But now we may be assured

Rom. iv.  
25.

Psa. xxx.  
9.

Rom. viii.  
34.

1 Cor. xv.  
14.  
Ver. 19.

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## Of the Resurrection.

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assured, that the same Power, by which SERM.  
he was raised, shall raise us up also. XIII.  
And since the Partition-Wall is now  
broken down, and all the *Jewish* Rites  
and Privileges at an End; all Men now  
may enter into the Church, all alike may  
participate the Fruits of Christ's Triumph  
and Victory. Such is the Power, and such  
are the Benefits which attend his *Resur-*  
*rection.*

3. CONSIDER the *Glory* of his *Resur-*  
*rection.* For through Tribulation he en-  
tered into *Glory*, and because he humbled Luke  
himself, and became obedient unto Death, xxiv. 26.  
even the Death of the Cross, therefore did  
he rise again, to be highly exalted. How Phil. ii.  
glorious was his Body, how triumphant 8.  
was his Soul, when he broke out of the  
Prison of the Grave, in his full Strength  
invested with Light unspeakable, and in-  
vironed with the Rays of his Divinity?  
What Excess of Joy flowed in upon  
his Soul, when he first heard his Church  
Triumphant, consisting of Angels and  
Archangels, of Patriarchs and Prophets,  
and the Spirits of just Men made per-  
fect, chanting out his Praises and at-  
tending his Triumphs with Shouts, and  
giving him the Titles of Faithful and  
True? With what Joy did he consider his

SERM. Church Militant, rising by its Ruins, glorified by Persecutions, beating down the Scepters of Heathen Princes and False Gods, before his Cross, oracled with Apostles, abounding with holy and unspotted Virgins, Martyrs and Confessors, constant in their Faith, and unchangeable for ever? How did he rejoice, when he beheld the Devil in Chains under his Feet, Hell and Death led Captive, all his Enemies either subdued or reconciled unto him, and Millions of Souls purchased with his own Blood? When he saw the Joy of all Creatures at his Rising, the Sun withdrawing his Light from the World, to behold this glorious Solemnity; the Earth dancing, and the Voices of *Multitudes as of many Waters*, and as of *mighty Thunderings*, resounding *Hallelujahs* without ceasing? In a Word, when he saw himself in the Arms of his Father's Love; laden with Crowns, and arrayed with the royal Purple of his own Blood, and adored by all as King of Kings, and Lord of Lords. Thus swallowed up in an Ocean of Pleasure wert thou, O my Saviour! Infinite were thy Sufferings, but more infinite (if that were possible) were thy Joys and Raptures! I come now to shew,

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II. WHAT Assurance we have that *our* SERM. Bodies shall be raised from the Dead, and XIII. that we shall partake of this glorious *Re-* *surrection*, comprehended in these Words: *They shall arise: with my dead Body they shall arise.*

THAT there will be a *Resurrection* of the Dead, seems to have been the general Opinion of all People and Nations in the World, there being few so barbarous as wholly to omit the laying up the Bodies of the Dead. And even the Order and successive Generations of the World declare this Truth to us, for what is the new Birth of Times and Seasons, Plants, Birds, and Beasts, but a perpetual Image of the *Resurrection*? And those, who have been most eminent for Learning and Wisdom amongst the Antients, have delivered down this Truth to us, both by Writing and Tradition. *Mercurius Trif-* *megistus* and *Pliny* both of them affirm it as certain Truth, and *Plato* founds it upon this Axiom, That every living Thing comes from something Dead. Besides, doth not every one's natural Reason tell him, that it is impossible for God to be unjust? And, without a *Resurrection*, how can the Un-*godly* be punished, and the Righteous meet with their promised Reward? In



SERM. this World the Blessings of God are, for  
 XIII. the most Part, dispensed with an undistin-  
 guishing Hand; his Sun equally shines,  
 and his Rain descends upon the Fields of  
 the Just and of the Unjust, of him that  
 sweareth and him that feareth an Oath. If  
 then our Hopes of another Life are not  
 sure and certain, God must be unequal  
 in his Doings, in filling the Bellies of  
 the Wicked with his Treasures, and suffer-  
 ing the Righteous to lack, and to be of  
 all Men the most miserable. But God is  
 infinitely wise and just; and therefore  
 none but *Libertines* and *Epicureans* have  
 denied this Article of our Faith; none  
 but such as have made it their Interest  
 that there should be no future Account, and  
 who lie under the Terror of such Punish-  
 ments as are due to their Crimes, endeavour  
 to extinguish the Belief of a *Resurrection*.  
*Makunt extingui penitus, quam ad supplicia*  
*reservari*, says *Minutius Felix*, they had  
 rather be utterly annihilated, than to un-  
 dergo eternal Torments.

THIS Article of a *Resurrection* was  
 plainly delivered down to us in the Old  
 Testament. *I am the God of Abraham,*  
*Isaac, and Jacob*: From whence our Saviour  
 argues, that God is not the God of the Dead  
 but of the Living, i. e. that the Souls of

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these Patriarchs had then an Existence, and SERM.  
 that, to make them intire Men, they must **XIII.**  
 be reunited to their Bodies. And thus  
 the Prophet *Ezekiel*, *I will open your* Ezekiel  
*Graves, and cause you to come out of* xxxvii.  
 them. And agreeably to this the Holy 12.  
 Gospel teaches us, *The Father raiseth up* John v.  
*the Dead and quickeneth them:* And, *The* 21.  
*Sea shall give up the Dead which are in it,* Rev. xx.  
*and Death and the Grave their Dead,* 13.  
 and all, both small and great, shall stand be-  
 fore God. And *St. Paul* gives us a Rea-  
 son why it must needs be so; because  
 every one must receive according to what 2 Cor. v.  
 he hath done in his Body, and be judged ac- 10.  
 cording to his Works.

AND indeed, what Repugnancy, what  
 Impossibility, even in Reason is there,  
 that the Dead should be raised? Cannot  
 the same God who formed both the Soul  
 and the Body, and united them together  
 at the first, gather together our disjointed  
 Particles at the last Day, and restore to  
 every Soul his own Body, though never  
 so much mangled and changed, or dis-  
 persed over the Face of the whole World?  
 Do but consider the wonderful Effects of  
 God's Omnipotence, how willing and  
 ready all Creatures are to obey the Voice  
 and Commands of God; even the stormy

SERM. *Winds fulfil* God's Word, and the Sea  
 XIII. gives up its Dead. Perhaps thou canst  
 not comprehend the Manner how our  
 Bodies shall be raised up at the Last Day,  
 or solve the Difficulties which may be  
 objected against this Article of our Faith;  
 But what art thou, O vain Man! that en-  
 deavourest to fathom the Counsels of the  
 Almighty? Canst thou tell how thou  
 wast formed at first, or how thou wast  
 wrought in thy Mother's Womb? Much  
 less canst thou unfold how the World was  
 created out of Nothing, and this curious  
 Building raised without any Materials.  
 Tell me then, thou vain Pretender to  
 Science, by what Art and Power could God  
 say, *Let there be Light, and there was*  
*Light*, and produce all Things by his  
 Word, out of the unfruitful Womb of  
 Nothing? Nay, do but tell me how the  
 least Insect is formed, how thy Hand  
 moves, or thy Eye sees? And then I will  
 plainly demonstrate this great Mystery of  
 the *Resurrection* to thee. How unrea-  
 sonable then is it to call in Question what  
 God has plainly revealed to us, because we  
 do not thoroughly understand the Manner  
 of it? When, in Truth, we understand  
 nothing at all thoroughly. God has cast  
 a Veil over the Face of Nature; and  
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though we may make some uncertain Con-  
 jectures what is concealed under it; yet we  
 cannot positively and certainly determine  
 about it: Let us therefore be content to be  
 ignorant in such Things, as are beyond the  
 Reach of our Enquiry, and above our Capa-  
 city; and though we cannot say with the Fa-  
 ther, *Credo, quia impossibile*; yet it is high-  
 ly reasonable to give our Assent to such  
 Truths as are plainly revealed to us, which  
 do not imply a self-evident Contradiction.  
 Since therefore the *Resurrection* of  
 our Bodies is so frequently inculcated in the  
 Holy Scripture, and contains in it nothing  
 contrary to the Verdict of our Senses, or  
 the plain Dictates of unbiassed Reason;  
 let us give our full and hearty Assent to this  
 Fundamental Article of our Creed; and  
 then let us proceed,

SERM.  
 XIII.

III. and Lastly, To consider, what Use  
 and Improvement ought to be made of  
 both these Truths contained in the Text;  
 and what Influence the Belief of our Sa-  
 viour's *Resurrection*, and our own, ought to  
 have on our Lives and Conversations: There-  
 fore, *Awake and sing, ye that dwell in the  
 Dust.* From which Words we may in-  
 fer,

First, WHAT Duties are to be per-  
 formed,

Secondly,

SERM. *Secondly*, WHO the Persons are who  
XIII. are more particularly obliged to perform  
them.

I. OF the Duties to be performed,  
*Awake and sing.* It is therefore every  
one's Duty to *awake*, to awake from Ig-  
norance, and Error, and Unbelief; from  
worldly Thoughts and the Lethargy of  
Sin. Open your Hearts to your Saviour  
with Apprehensions and Pursuits of Im-  
mortality; be watchful over your Souls  
and Bodies, to avoid all Evil, and perform  
all Good, seeing it is in your Power to  
make them either eternally happy, or  
eternally miserable. Nor must you only  
awake, but *sing* also; let your Souls mag-  
nify the Lord, and your Spirits rejoice in  
God your Saviour. What a mighty Sal-  
vation? What a glorious *Resurrection*?  
By what wonderful Means? And how  
surely to be obtained, hath he wrought  
for you, and confirmed unto you? Let  
holy Thankfulness ravish you, let Extasies  
of Joy and Praise transport your Hearts,  
and overflow your Tongues, and never  
suffer you to cease from admiring, ap-  
plauding, and extolling what God hath done  
for your Souls. Let your Acclamations  
be as endless and boundless towards him,  
as his Benefits have been towards you.  
And

And yet farther, to *sing*, supposeth a SERM.  
cheerful Mind, a Mind at Unity both in XIII.  
itself, and with others, a Concert of   
Hearts as well as Voices, and a melodious  
Harmony of Affections. Let us therefore  
awake from jarring Passions, and  
deadly Feuds, from Envy and Malice,  
and all Manner of Bitterness : And tune  
both our Hearts and Tongues to a friendly  
Agreement and brotherly Love.

2. As to the Persons who are more  
particularly obliged to perform those Duties,  
they are such as *dwell in the Dust*.  
*Awake and sing, ye that dwell in the Dust*.  
By which Expression are denoted,

1<sup>st</sup>, THE Wordly-minded.

2<sup>dly</sup>, THE Humble.

3<sup>dly</sup>, THE Afflicted.

4<sup>thly</sup>, THOSE who are dead.

(1.) LET the worldly-minded *Epicure*  
awake from sensual Pleasures and carnal  
Delights, from sordid Affections and vile  
Imaginations ; let them no longer de-  
light in polluting their Souls with flesh-  
ly Lusts ; but let them heighten and en-  
noble their Minds in the Belief of a blessed  
Eternity. Let them sublime their Thoughts  
and Actions from the Dregs of this World ;  
let them take good Heed, lest by any  
Means, either by doubting of the Truth  
of



SERM. of the *Resurrection*, or by neglecting to lead  
 XIII. a new Life in Conformity to it, or by receiving the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper unworthily, they again crucify to themselves that Lord of Life, who is risen from the Dead.

Job xlii.  
6.

(2.) THE meek and humble Person may be said to *dwell in the Dust*, because he *abhors* himself and *repents in Dust and Ashes*; he is vile in his own Eyes, and thinks himself not worthy to lick up the *Crumbs which fall from his Master's Table*; but let such, as are truly humble, *awake and sing*, for God will exalt the Humble; their blessed Saviour, that Pattern of Humility, is lifted up, and exalted on God's Right-hand, and he will certainly *draw* them *after* him; their Place will be high, and their Reward great, in the Kingdom of Heaven.

(3.) THOSE, who are in an afflicted Condition, may be said to *dwell in the Dust*; because they do not only cast it upon their Heads, but bury their Souls in it. Let these Sons of Grief rouse themselves up, and take Courage; let them rejoice, because their Redeemer liveth, who will shortly come and ease them of all their Troubles, and wipe away all Tears from their Eyes. What though they are deformed or diseased in their Bodies, yet shall

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shall they appear streight and sound at the SERM.  
*Resurrection.* What though they are now XIII.  
 poor and in Want, they shall then be filled  
 and want no good Thing. What though  
 they have left their Estates, Friends, or  
 Relations, all these Losses will shortly be  
 made up to them, and they shall meet  
 them in another World, never to be parted  
 again. And methinks the Belief of a  
*Resurrection* should be a sufficient Remedy  
 against all immoderate Sorrow, for the  
 Loss of our Friends and Relations. For  
 will there not shortly come a Time, when  
 even our scattered Ashes will fly into  
 one another's Embraces again, and a new  
 Life will breathe into our Dust, and make  
 it stand upon its Feet. Why then should  
 we mourn like Men without Hope, why  
 should we lament the Death of our Friends,  
 as if we were separated from them for  
 ever? It is true they cannot return to us,  
 but it will not be long before we shall go  
 to them. Let us rather *awake and sing*,  
 when we have good Reason to hope that  
 our Friends and Relations die in the Lord,  
 or when we are under any other Pressure  
 or Calamity; considering that our *Re-*  
*deemer liveth*, and that with these very  
*Eyes we shall shortly see him.* Let us  
 consider the wonderful Disproportion be-  
 tween

SERM. tween our present Troubles and our future  
 XIII. Triumphs; let us bear in Mind the Ex-  
 amples of those blessed Martyrs who sang  
 in the Flames, triumphed on Wheels, and  
 preached on the Cross; considering that  
 our Faith and Hope is the same, and  
 that *the Sufferings of this present Life are not*  
 worthy to be compared with the Glory which  
 shall be revealed hereafter.

Rom. viii.  
 18.

(4.) and Lastly, THOSE who are dead  
 may be said to dwell in the Dust, and this  
 is the literal and most obvious Sense of the  
 Words. All those who are deceased,  
 though never so mangled and shattered;  
 though their Members are dispersed into  
 different Parts of the World, and con-  
 verted into the Substance of Fowls, Fishes,  
 or Birds; yet, at the Sound of the last  
 Trump, they shall all be gathered toge-  
 ther; their disjointed Particles, like Sol-  
 diers in a well disciplined Army, shall meet  
 together, unite and fall into their proper  
 Ranks. They shall all rouse themselves  
 and awake from that deep Sleep which had  
 seized them, and, if they lived and died in  
 Christ, they shall rejoice and sing also;  
 what was before their Duty, shall then  
 prove their Reward. Their Saviour shall  
 raise them up with Words of Comfort,  
 saying, as here in the Text, *Awake and*  
*sing,*



sing, ye that dwell in the Dust. Awake and SERM.  
 rise, ye blessed Bodies, receive again your XIII.  
 purified Souls with Welcome unspeakable ;  
 and enter together with me your Saviour  
 into Joys and Jubilees everlasting. You  
 shall toil no more now, but only sing  
 your own Joys and my Praises. All Tears  
 shall be wiped away from your Eyes,  
 your Labour shall be turned into Triumphs,  
 and your Sighs and Groans into Hallelu-  
 jabs. Wherefore, my beloved Brethren,  
 (as the Apostle speaks) let us comfort one  
 another with these Words.

SERMON

## S E R M O N XIV.

The Sin and Danger of grieving  
the Holy Spirit.

E P H E S. iv. 30.

*Grieve not the Holy Spirit of God,  
whereby ye are sealed unto the Day  
Redemption.*

SERM.  
XIV.

**I**N the Verses before the Text, the  
Apostle exhorts the *Ephefians* to an  
holy and unblameable Life, to bid  
adieu to all those Sins and vicious  
Courses in which they lived before they  
were converted to Christianity, and to  
practise all those Virtues which were re-  
commended to them in the Holy Gospel,  
Ver. 17. *This I say therefore, and testify in the Lord,  
that ye henceforth walk not as other Gen-  
tiles walk, in the Vanity of their Mind,*  
having

## Of grieving the Holy Spirit.

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having the Understanding darkened, being SERM.  
alienated from the Life of God, through XIV.  
the Ignorance that is in them, because of the  
Blindness of their Heart: who being past  
feeling, have given themselves over unto Law-  
lessness, to work all Uncleaness with  
Greediness. And then it follows, But ye Eph. iv.  
have not so learned Christ; if so be that ye 20.  
have heard him, and have been taught by him,  
as the Truth is in Jesus: that ye put off,  
concerning the former Conversation, the old  
Man, which is corrupt according to the deceit-  
ful Lusts, and be renewed in the Spirit of your  
Mind; and that ye put on the new Man,  
which is created in Righteousness and true  
Holiness. And then he enumerates the  
Heads of those particular Sins, which they  
ought to avoid, Wherefore putting away lying, Ver. 25.  
speak every Man Truth with his Neighbour;  
be ye angry and sin not: Let him that stole  
steal no more: Let no corrupt Communica-  
tion proceed out of your Mouth. And then  
he lays down the most prevalent Ar-  
gument, why they should forsake all these  
Vices, and practise the contrary Virtues,  
because, by such heinous Sins as these,  
they grieved the Holy Spirit of God; that  
Holy Spirit, who had planted the Gospel  
amongst them, called them to the Hopes  
of Salvation, and gave them the Know-  
ledge



SERM. ledge of the Truth: *And grieve not the*  
 XIV. *Holy Spirit of God, whereby ye are sealed*  
 unto the Day of Redemption. For the better Understanding of these Words, I shall endeavour to shew,

I. WHAT is here meant by *the Holy Spirit of God.*

II. IN what Sense he is said to be *grieved.*

III. WHAT those Sins are, which are most *grievous* to him.

IV. I SHALL lay down the Reasons why we ought to be so careful, that, by the Commission of any of these Sins, we do not *grieve God's Holy Spirit.*

I. By *the Holy Spirit of God* is here meant, the third Person in the Holy Trinity, God blessed for ever, who, as we are told, takes up his Abode in the Heart of every humble and well disposed Person; for he, *whose Name is Holy, dwells in the high and holy Place; and with him also that is of a contrite and humble Spirit, to revive the Spirit of the humble, and to revive the Heart of the contrite Ones.* His Throne is indeed in Heaven, he inhabiteth Eternity; but yet the Heaven of Heavens cannot contain him, his Essence is diffused through

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through the whole World, or rather he SERM.  
contains the whole World in himself; XIV.  
but yet he humbles himself to take up his  
Abode with every good Man, and vouch-  
safes his more immediate Presence to all  
true Members of the Church of *Christ*.  
This is that *Holy Spirit*, from whom pro-  
ceeds every good and perfect Gift, and who  
works in us both to will and to do of his  
own good Pleasure; who enlightens our  
Understandings, co-operates with our Wills,  
and cleanses and purifies our Affections.  
It is he who first sows the Seed of Grace  
in our Hearts, and then cherishes and  
prosperes his own Handy-work, and at last  
seals us unto the Day of Redemption.

LET us enquire, in the next Place,

II. WHAT it is to grieve this *Holy Spirit*: For, since God is a most simple and uncompounded Being, he must needs be also immutable; in him there is no *Variableness nor Shadow of turning*, and by Jam. 1  
Consequence he cannot be subject to 17.  
any of those Passions and Affections, that we frail Mortals are liable to. He is an infinitely wise and an infinitely powerful Being, and is possessed of perfect Felicity; and sufficiently happy in the Enjoyment of himself; and therefore as he is exalted above all Praise, so, much more

SERM. above all Pain or Grief: He sits above,

XIV. and beholds the Actions of the Sons of

Men, and imparts his Blessings to them, and is willing to make them happy; but can receive no Accession to his Glory from their Service; neither can their Disobedience detract any thing from him: For as

Job xxxv. *Elibu* very well argues, *If thou sinnest,*

6.

*what dost thou against him? Or, if thy Transgressions be multiplied, what dost thou unto him? If thou be righteous, what givest thou him? Or what receiveth he of thine Hand? Thy Wickedness may hurt a Man as thou art, and thy Righteousness may profit the Son of Man.* Since there-

fore there are no such Things as Passions or Affections in the Divine Nature, how can the *Holy Spirit* be said to be grieved?

To understand which, we must consider, that since, by reason of the Weakness and Frailty of our Understandings, we cannot frame any suitable and becoming Notions of God; therefore, God is pleased to condescend to us, and to reveal himself to us after such a Manner, as is most agreeable to our Apprehensions: And therefore he describes those Operations, which he performs, just as we, Men, would do if we were to discourse of them one to another; thus, when God is described, in the

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*Of grieving the Holy Spirit.*

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Holy Scripture, performing any Action, SERM.  
in the Performance of which, we, Men, XIV.  
make Use of our Hands or Feet, he is also  
described as having the same Members;  
so we read of God's *walking in the Gar-*  
*den of Eden*, and *talking* with Man, and  
*fighting* for his Servants: In like Manner  
our Actions are described as producing the  
same Effects in God, which those Actions  
would produce in Men like ourselves.  
Thus, when we make unsuitable Returns  
to God, for his Benefits and Mercies heap-  
ed upon us, God is said to *repent*; when we  
disobey God and transgress his Commands,  
he is said to be *angry and grieved*; which  
Expressions are always to be taken in a me-  
taphorical Sense, and imply thus much,  
that God, by his immutable Nature and  
Power, performs such Things, as we Men  
do with our bodily Members and Affec-  
tions. And therefore, as we are said to  
*grieve* another Man, and to displease him,  
when we either speak or do such Things  
as are disagreeable to his Nature, or con-  
trary to his Will, or directly opposite to  
his Commands: So we may be then said  
to *grieve the Holy Spirit*, when we do any  
wicked Thing, which is contrary to the  
Holiness and Purity of his Nature, or dis-  
allowed of by that Light set up in our

SERM. Consciences, or revealed to us in his Holy  
 XIV. Word : And as, by *grieving* Men, we be-  
 get in them an Averseness against us ; so,  
 by *grieving the Holy Spirit*, we provoke  
 him to depart from us, to with-hold the  
 blessed Influences of his Grace from our Souls,  
 and to give us up to our own vile Lusts  
 and carnal Affections ; so that we become  
 the *Cage of every unclean Bird*, an Ha-  
 bitation for every impure Spirit to dwell in ;  
 which is the most fearful and deplorable  
 Condition a Man can fall into in the World,  
 And therefore I come to shew,

III. WHAT those Sins are, which are  
 most *grievous* to the *Holy Spirit* of God ;  
 or, by what Steps we arrive at this sad  
 and deplorable Condition. For it is  
 plain, that all Sins are not equal, and that,  
 though the *Holy Spirit* of God is *grieved*  
 by every wilful Sin, which we commit,  
 yet he is not displeased with every one  
 alike ; the Commission of some Sins pro-  
 vokes him only to hide his Face from us  
 for a Time ; whilst others drive him away,  
 and (for a long Time at least, if not for  
 ever) deprive us of the Light of his Coun-  
 tenance : And therefore, in the Gospel,  
 some Sins are compared to a *Mote*, others  
 to a *Beam* ; and in Proportion to the Guilt,  
 so

so is the Punishment; those will be punished SER.  
with fewer, these with more Stripes. XIV.

LET us consider therefore, where the Sinner sets out, what a fatal Progress he makes in a wicked Course of Life, and by what Degrees he arrives at a State of final Impenitency. Those who have been instructed in the Principles of the Christian Religion, who have had the Advantage of a liberal and virtuous Education, cannot perfectly give themselves up to commit Sin with Greediness, and let loose the Reins to a full Career of Debauchery. The Devil, that old and subtle Serpent, is too great an Artist in the Trade of seducing Souls, to think to wind himself in all of a Sudden. No, he insinuates himself by Degrees, and intices the Sinner at first to the lighter Breaches of his Duty; he persuades him, not to be too straight-laced, and, under the specious Title of harmless Freedoms, to indulge himself in some Acts of his beloved Vice; And, when once he has broke down the Fence, and transgressed the Limits of his Duty, it is an easy Matter to draw him on further. For the Way of Vice and Wickedness lies down Hill, and, when once the Rolling-stone is moved, there is required little Force to continue its Motion.

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Thus,



SERM. Thus, when the Sinner gives himself the

XIV. Liberty of committing those Sins which

he thinks the least offensive, he will soon think all to be such, and in a short Time contract a Habit of Vice; Continuance in Sin will, by Degrees, vitiate his Understanding, and bias his Judgment, so that he will esteem the grosser Acts of Sin, but as a light Offence, or perhaps as an harmless Frolick; and then the next Step is to deride and laugh at such, as are not so impudently wicked as himself.

THIS is that Climax or Gradation which the *Psalmist* observed long ago, in the *Psa. i. 1.* Lives of wicked Men, *Blessed is the Man that walketh not in the Counsel of the Ungodly, nor standeth in the Way of Sinners, nor sitteth in the Seat of the Scornful.* The first Step is the *Walking in the Counsel of the Ungodly*, the contracting a Familiarity with such Men as are notorious for the Practice of any Vice. The next Step is the *Standing in the Way of Sinners*, i. e. the Bearing them Company in their wicked Practices, the being drawn away by their Examples to commit the same Crimes; and then there remains nothing but to *sit in the Seat of the Scornful*, i. e. to laugh at and deride those, who are not so good Proficients in the School of Impiety,

plety, nor have arrived to so high a Pitch SERM.  
of Licentiousness as themselves. First, XIV.  
Men are drawn in by the pleasing Bait of  
some alluring Temptation, to let go their  
Integrity, and to transgress the Command  
of God in some particular Instance of their  
Duty; and then they are prevailed upon  
to indulge themselves in the frequent Com-  
mission of this Sin, till, by the frequent  
Practice of it, it grows into an Habit,  
and this Habit by Continuance is so streng-  
thened and confirmed, that it becomes a  
second Nature; and then the Sinner will  
find it as difficult a Matter to break it  
off, as for the *Ethiopian to change his Skin,*  
or the *Leopard his Spots*; for, by every  
wilful Sin that a Man commits, he con-  
tracts a greater Inclination to commit the  
same Sin again; because hereby he *grieves*  
*God's Holy Spirit*, and intercepts the E-  
manations of his Grace upon his Soul;  
and the less Assistance we have from God's  
Grace, the stronger our Inclinations are to do  
Evil; and the oftener we offend God and  
grieve his *Holy Spirit*, the farther he with-  
draws himself from us, and the less As-  
sistance he affords us: *For unto him that* Mat. xxv.  
*bath, much more shall be given, and he* 29.  
*shall have Abundance: But from him that*  
*bath not, shall be taken away, even that*  
*which*

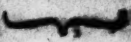
SERM. *which he hath, i. e.* he, that makes Use of  
 XIV. that Grace which God has given him,  
 shall receive more; but he that abuses it,  
 or neglects to employ it to those Purposes  
 for which it was bestowed upon him, shall  
 be deprived of it, and be given up to the  
 Guidance and Conduct of his own per-  
 verse Will and sensual Inclinations.

LET me appeal to the Experience of  
 every Sinner, was it not with much Re-  
 luctancy and Remorse that he first entered  
 upon a sinful Course of Life? Did not his  
 Conscience fly in his Face, and reproach  
 him for his Sin? Did he not hear, as it  
 were, the Voice of God's *Holy Spirit* cor-  
 recting and reproving him, and pointing  
 out to him the dangerous Consequences  
 of the Courses he took? Did he not un-  
 dergo many Pangs of Conscience, and  
 Agonies of Mind, before he could freely  
 indulge himself in the Practice of his  
 Vice? And, what were these but the  
 Motions of God's *Holy Spirit* in his Soul,  
 endeavouring to reclaim him, and either  
 to allure or fright him from his wicked  
 Courses? And the longer he goes on in  
 a wilful Course of obstinate sinning a-  
 gainst God, doth he not find the less  
 Reluctancy in sinning, till at last the *Holy*  
*Spirit* leaves him to himself, and his Con-  
 science



science is, as it were, *seared with an hot* SERM.

*Iron, i. e.* suffers him to caress his darling XIV.

Sin, without any Misgiving or Remorse? 

I have insisted the longer upon this Head,

because this is one of the most successful

Devices of the Devil, of which we ought

not to be ignorant, who, by leading us 2 Cor. ii,

on from one Degree of sinning to another, 11.

endeavours to deprive us of those blessed

Influences of God's *Holy Spirit*, which

are the only Stay and Support of our Souls.

And therefore I proceed,

IV. To give you some Reasons why

we ought to be very careful, that, by the

Commission of any known Sin, we do

not grieve God's *Holy Spirit*; and I shall

go no farther than the Words of the

Text :

*First*, BECAUSE he is a *Spirit*.

*Secondly*, BECAUSE he is an *Holy Spirit*.

*Thirdly*, BECAUSE it is he who seals us to the Day of Redemption.

I. WE ought to be very careful that,

by the Commission of any Sin, we do

not grieve God's *Holy Spirit*, from this Con-

sideration, because he is a *Spirit, i. e.* he

is a Being endowed with the highest

Excellencies and transcendent Perfections.

And these I shall consider either absolutely

in

SERM. in themselves, or with Relation to us  
 XIV. *First*, These Excellencies considered absolutely and in themselves, are a sufficient Argument to engage us not to *grieve* him. It is the Nature of Mankind to proportion their Esteem and Valuation of Things, according to that Worth and Excellency which they apprehend to be in them; and, if so, nothing can demand our Veneration and Esteem, with equal Authority, to this glorious and infinitely perfect Spirit; and, since it is his good Pleasure to humble himself, and to condescend so low as to be our Guest, and to take up his Abode with us, how careful ought we to be, that, by any indecent Word or unbecoming Action, we do not *grieve* or offend him; it is the *Apostle's* Argument to the *Hebrews*, to persuade them to Hospitality, and to entertain Strangers, that thereby some have *entertained Angels unawares*; and, if it is so great an Honour to entertain an Angel, how much more to have our Bodies and Souls made the Habitation of the great God of Heaven and Earth? Who would not deck and adorn his Soul with becoming Graces and Virtues, and remove out of the Way all such Vices and evil Affections, as render so great and honourable a Guest less welcome

## Of grieving the Holy Spirit.

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welcome to us? But, if we consider the SERM.  
Excellencies and Perfections of this *Holy* XIV.  
*Spirit*, with that Relation which they  
bear to us, the Argument will be much  
more strong and prevailing; for it is not  
only an infinitely glorious *Spirit* that we  
entertain, but it is a *Spirit* from whom  
we receive innumerable Favours and Be-  
nefits; it is that *Spirit* by which we were  
at first created, which preserves us in  
Being, which defends us in all Dangers,  
comforts and supports us in all our Dis-  
tresses, and will either reward or punish  
us at the Last Day. It is therefore the  
greatest Madness in the World to be un-  
grateful to so good a Benefactor, and by  
this our Ingratitude to cast ourselves out  
of his Protection, who alone is able to  
defend us; and to deprive ourselves of  
those Joys which this Comforter brings  
along with him.

2. BUT it is also very considerable that  
his distinguishing Character in the Text  
is, that he is the *Holy Spirit*; which is  
the *second* Consideration I shall make Use  
of to persuade us to be careful that we  
do not grieve and offend him, by the Com-  
mission of any wilful Sin; for if Holi-  
ness is his distinguishing Character, that  
darling Attribute by which he will be  
known



SERM. known and worshipped by the Sons of God,  
XIV Man, the

XIV. Men; then nothing can be so grievous Creat

and distasteful to him, as a wicked and  
unsanctified Heart ; for, since Gods Holin  
ness doth consist in the Rectitude of his Being  
Nature, nothing can be more contrary and  
opposite to a *Holy Spirit* than Sin, which  
is in its own Nature an Opposition to  
the Will of God, and a Deflexion from  
the Rule of right Reason. To make this  
more plain, let us consider, that all those  
moral Laws, which God has made the  
eternal Standards of our Duty, are not  
the arbitrary Dictates of God's Will, but  
flow from the very Nature of our Beings  
and the Reason of all God's Commands  
is to be resolved into their Agreeableness  
with the Nature of those Beings which  
are to be governed by them ; as, for In  
stance, God has therefore commanded Man  
to be just, charitable, and temperate, be  
cause these Virtues of Justice, and Cha  
rity, and Temperance, are the proper  
Means to promote the Good of Mankind  
in this World, to perfect and ennoble their  
Natures, and to render them happy in  
the World to come ; and therefore it is  
impossible, that God should command, or  
allow, or approve of Sin, because, every  
Sin being a Deflexion from the Law of  
God

God, is contrary to the Design of Man's SERM.  
 Creation, and so directly opposite to that XIV.  
 Holiness, and original Rectitude, which  
 is an essential Attribute of the Supreme  
 Being. And therefore wilfully, presump-  
 tuously, and obstinately to commit Sin, is  
 to affront God to the Face, and the high-  
 est Provocation which can be given to  
 his *Holy Spirit*; because it is to contra-  
 dict the very Design of our Creation, and  
 to oppose the eternal Decrees of his Pro-  
 vidence.

Lastly, LET us be careful that we do  
 not grieve the *Holy Spirit*, because it is  
 by him that we are sealed unto the Day  
 of Redemption; i. e. as some learned  
 Commentators understand the Words, be-  
 cause by this *Holy Spirit* the *Ephesians*  
 were marked and set out as a Part of  
*Christ's Church*, by the Preaching of the  
 Gospel amongst them, and the Confir-  
 mation of it, by Wonders and Miracles.  
 The Words seem to be a Metaphor, taken  
 from Merchants, who set a Mark or Seal  
 upon those Wares and Goods which they  
 have purchased; and it being the Custom  
 formerly, and still continued in some Coun-  
 tries, to buy and sell Servants in the Mar-  
 ket, the *Apostle* alludes to it, and tells the  
*Ephesians*, that our Saviour *Christ* having  
 pur-

SERM. purchased them with his own Blood, by

XIV. the Preaching of the Gospel amongst them, had set his *Seal* on them, and marked them out for his Servants, and had given them Assurance that they were designed to serve him in this World until the *Day of the general Redemption, i. e.* the Resurrection of the Just to Glory and Immortality; and that therefore they ought to be careful not to grieve this *Holy Spirit*, by a wilful Commission of any known Sin, because nothing could be more contrary to the Design of the Gospel; nothing would more certainly defeat the gracious Purposes of God, in preaching it amongst them, and, by Consequence, be more grievous to his *Holy Spirit*, than the living ungodly and unchristian Lives; and by any unfavourable Discourse, or wicked Action, to cast Scandal upon their most pure and holy Religion.

OTHERS will have more than this meant by this *Sealing of the Holy Spirit*, and understand by it, that Confidence, and Fulness of Assurance, which some eminently pious and devout Men have had of their Salvation; the *Holy Spirit* sealing, ratifying, and confirming this comfortable Truth unto them, that they are



the Elect of God, and that he will enable them to persevere to the End, and that finally they shall obtain everlasting Bliss and Happiness. That this may be the happy Condition of some Persons, in some Circumstances, I do not deny; there are other Texts of Scripture which seem to confirm it; this may be that *white Stone*, and *new Name*, which no Man knows but he that has it. And when God calls Men to be eminent Instances of Patience, or to be heroical Examples of Virtue and Religion, he may give them a nearer Prospect of those Rewards which they shall receive; God may give such Men, I say, an extraordinary Portion of his *Holy Spirit*, whereby they may not only be supported under their Sufferings, but be enabled to cry, *Abba, Father*, i. e. have strong and vigorous Impressions upon their Minds, and Confidence of their final Perseverance; and, if we understand the Words thus, then the Force of the Argument lies here, that that Man, who designs to have any comfortable Assurance of his Salvation, must take great Care that he doth not grieve God's Holy Spirit; by any wilful and presumptuous Sin; because every such Sin takes off his Trust and Confidence from God, and will make him ve-

Rev. ii. 17.

SERM. ry doubtful and scrupulous, whether he  
 XIV. is in a State of Salvation, and question  
 his happy Condition in another World;  
 and, certainly, if any Man can be assured  
 of his Salvation in this Life, if there  
 is any Person so happy as to have this  
*Seal* set upon him, and be assured by  
 the Testimony of the *Holy Spirit*, that  
 he is chosen for a Vessel of Honour; it  
 must be such a Man who has been re-  
 markable for his Piety and Devotion,  
 through the whole Course of his Life;  
 who in his Infancy has been dedicated  
 to God, and seasoned with the Principles  
 of our Holy Religion; who, by an ear-  
 ly Piety, has made it evident he is under  
 the immediate Conduct of God's *Holy*  
*Spirit*, and through the whole Course of  
 his Life has been preserved free from  
 presumptuous Sins; such a Man as this  
 may hope to have some Glimpse of the  
 beatifical Vision in this Life, and receive  
 the Earnest here of eternal Happiness  
 hereafter. It is such a Man as this alone,  
 who with St. Paul can wish to be *dis-*  
*solved and to be with Christ, which is much*  
*better.* It is he alone who may expect  
 that *Eudamonia*, so much wished for by the  
*Heathens*, which may be *Englisbed* in the  
 Phrase of the Prophet Baalam, *Dying the*  
*Death*

*Death of the Righteous:* Oh! that I might SERM.  
*die the Death of the Righteous,* and that XIV.  
*my latter End might be like his.* Whereas  
those Persons who have led wicked and  
ungodly Lives, and, for some considerable  
Time, have been led Captive by their  
Lusts, and lived under the Dominion of  
the *Prince of the Power of the Air, the*  
*Spirit that works in the Children of Disobe-*  
*dience,* though such Men may repent of  
their Sins, and turn from the Evil of their  
Ways, and finally obtain eternal Happiness;  
yet for the most Part, as they have many  
Checks and Misgivings of Conscience, dur-  
ing their whole Lives, so, when they are  
leaving this World and entering upon a  
State of Eternity, their Minds misgive  
them, and their Consciences bring their old  
Sins to their Remembrance; they suffer  
great Throws and Agonies of Mind, and  
are very apt to call in Question the Sinceri-  
ty of their Repentance; and therefore it  
behoves every one who desires to die peace-  
ably and quietly, with full Peace with God  
and his own Conscience, and comfortable  
Hopes of Happiness hereafter, to take  
Care that he be not guilty of any wilful or  
presumptuous Sin; and that he doth not  
contract any vicious Habit. And if so, how  
foolish a Thing then it is, to go on in a



**SERM. 2. finful Course of Life, on this Supposition,**

XIV. that we shall have Time to repent hereafter, and to make our Peace with God up-

on a Death-bed? For, granting the Supposition, that we shall have both Time and Will to repent (which seldom, very seldom, happens) how much Trouble and Anxiety of Mind will it cost us? How many Terrors of Conscience, how many Sighs and Tears, and, as the *Apostle* describes the

2 Cor. vii. **Condition of a sincere Penitent, For, behold,**  
 1. *this self-same Thing that ye sorrowed after*  
*a godly Sort, what Carefulness it wrought*  
*in you, yea, what Clearing of yourselves, yea,*  
*what Indignation, yea, what Fear, yea,*  
*what vehement Desire, yea, what Zeal, yea,*  
*what Revenge?* This is the Condition of a  
 Man who is roused from the Bed of Secu-  
 rity; and has a lively Sense of his Sins im-  
 printed upon his Conscience. How shall  
 we accuse and condemn our own Folly,  
 that we should do a Thing, which now  
 we heartily wish were undone again, or  
 that we never had done it; that we should  
 grieve that *Holy Spirit*, and force him to  
 withdraw himself from us, in whose So-  
 ciety our Happiness doth consist, and in  
 whose Presence there is Fulness of Joy.  
 And would but the Sinner, for once, be wise  
 and consider what the Consequence of

# Thing

Things will be, it is impossible that he **SERM.**  
should be so desperately mad, and stupidly **XIV.**

foolish, as to continue in the Commission  
of any known Sin. For, did he lay the  
Pleasure of the most grateful and acceptable  
Lust in the one Scale, and in the other that  
Trouble and Anxiety of Mind which it  
will cost him, even in this World, if ever  
repented of, he would find the Disproporti-  
on so great, that it would utterly discourage  
him from buying so poor and transitory a  
Pleasure at so dear a Rate. But, if the Pu-  
nishment of Sin is so great in this Life, how  
intolerable must it needs be in the Life to  
come, where *the Worm dieth not, and the  
Fire is not quenched?* And where these  
Torments are not only infinitely more in-  
tense, but also equally eternal, as to their  
Duration, with that God who inflicts them?  
From which God of his infinite Mercy keep  
us all, for *Jesus Christ* his Sake.

X 3

S E R M

## S E R M O N XV.

The Hazard and Folly of depriving  
ourselves wholly of the Influences  
of God's Holy Spirit.

1 THESS. V. 19.

*Quench not the Spirit.*

SERM.  
XV.

**T**HERE is no Head of Divini-  
ty which is more frequently  
insisted on, by practical Writers  
than that which treats of the  
Gifts and Graces of God's *Holy Spirit*  
and yet there is none which is less under-  
stood, or more grossly abused.

IF soberly considered, and according to  
the Analogy of Faith, it yields excellent  
Matter of Instruction and Edification  
Comfort and Support; but if handled irre-  
reverently and presumptuously, after the  
Manner of some modern Enthusiasts, it

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## Of quenching the Spirit.

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will only dazzle our Sight, and blind us into Error. SERM. XV.

THAT we may make the best Improvement of this Truth, let us follow the Example the *Apostle* has set us, who, amongst many plain and pathetical Directions, has inserted this, contained in the Text, *Quench not the Holy Spirit.*

THAT we may have a clearer Notion of these Words, I shall consider,

I. WHAT is meant by the *Spirit*.

II. WHAT by *quenching the Spirit*.

I. WHAT is meant by the *Spirit*.

Now, amongst the many different Significations which are put upon this Word by the Penmen of the Holy Writ, these three are the most remarkable.

1. *Spirit* is taken for the first Person of the Holy and Undivided Trinity.

2. FOR the Gifts and Graces of God's *Holy Spirit*, whether they are those *gratiae gratis datae*, those wonderful Gifts which were bestowed upon the first Propagators of the Christian Faith; or else, those *gratiae gratum facientes*, those divine Qualities and Endowments, which are wrought, by the Ministration of the *Holy Spirit*, in

SERM. the Hearts and Souls of true Believers,  
XV. Or,

3. THE Word, *Spirit*, is taken for those holy Motives and Inspirations by which these Gifts and Graces are wrought in us; and are also daily cherished and increased.

By *Spirit*, in the Text, may be meant; either, or both the two last of these, namely, the Gifts and Graces of God's *Holy Spirit*, as also, those Inspirations and Motions, by which they are wrought in the Souls of Men.

I COME to consider,

II. WHAT is meant by *quenching the Spirit*.

Now this is a figurative and metaphorical Expression, and seems to be a plain Allusion to those fiery Tongues which sat upon the *Apostles*, when they received the extraordinary Gifts of the Holy Ghost. And Fire is a very proper and suitable Emblem to denote to us the Operations of the *Holy Spirit*, if we consider the several Qualities and Effects of it.

I. IT is the Nature of Fire to burn up and consume those Things which are the proper Fuel to it. Thus when the *Holy Spirit* enters into the Soul of a Man, and becomes the reigning and governing Principle

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Principle there, it consumes and destroys SERM.  
all extravagant Passions, unruly Affec- XV.  
tions, and carnal Desires; it melts and  
dissolves the most stony Heart, reduces  
it into the Dust and Ashes of an unfeigned  
Repentance.

2. IT is the Nature of Fire to purify and  
refine metallic Bodies, to separate from them  
their Dross, and reduce them into a more  
useful Form and valuable Substance: Thus,  
the *Holy Spirit* of God purifies the Souls  
of Men, refines their Thoughts by sepa-  
rating from them all Worldliness, Carna-  
lity, and Profaneness, and reducing them  
into a new Form; creating a clean Heart,  
and renewing a right Spirit within them;  
that so they may become a fit Temple for  
the Holy Ghost to dwell in; and therefore  
God promises, *I will turn my Hand upon* Isa. i. 25.  
*thee, and purely purge away all thy Dross,*  
*and take away all thy Tin; and, a new Spi-* Ezek.  
*rit will I put within you, and I will take* xxxvi. 26.  
*away the stony Heart out of your Flesh.*

Again, 3. IT is the Nature of Fire to  
give Light, and especially to illuminate the  
most obscure and dark Places; thus the  
the *Holy Spirit* of God illuminates the  
Soul, dispels the Mists of Ignorance and  
Error, and the thick Clouds of Unbelief;  
it is a Light to those who sit in Dark-  
ness,



SERM. nefs, and the Day-star which arises in our  
 XV. Hearts. It is the Spirit of Wisdom and  
 Revelation, and of the Knowledge of God,  
 which enlightens the Eyes of the Under-  
 standing; a Lamp always shining and di-  
 recting our Minds, and Wills, and Works,  
 in the Way of Truth.

2 Pet. i.  
 19.  
 Eph. i.  
 17, 18.

4. FIRE produces its Effects, according to the Qualities and Dispositions of the Subject it operates and works upon; it softens Wax, it hardens Clay; Iron it makes malleable, Stone it calcines: And thus the *Holy Spirit* of God operates upon the Souls of Men, according to those different Dispositions and Qualifications which it meets with. Those, who are endowed with an humble, meek, and tender Disposition of Soul, it softens and melts down into Contrition and Repentance; it impresses its own Form and Figure upon them, and endows them with all its Gifts and Graces; but those who are worldly-minded, sensually affected, and continually grovelling in the Mire and Dirt, solicitously careful to burthen themselves with *thick Clay*; these it hardens, and by every Motion renders them more and more obdurate than they were before; so that, like *Pharaoh*, they become daily more perverse and

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*Of quenching the Spirit.*

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and stiff-necked, and, at last, sealed up SERM.  
to Destruction. XV.

*Lastly*, FIRE gives the most intense Heat, when compassed about with Cold, and in the Extremity of Weather, and in the severest Seasons, cheers and comforts us with its Heat: And thus the *Holy Spirit* affords us the greatest Support and Assistance, when we lie under the most violent Temptations, are surrounded with the most apparent Dangers, and almost wearied and tired out with continued Toils and Labours.

WHEN a Man is distressed on every Side, in a low and sinking Condition, and despairs of Help from every Thing else, *then*, he will find, that *God is a very pre-* Psa. xlvii.  
*sent Help in Time of Trouble*, to all those who put their Trust in him.

EVEN in our last Hours, when we are to maintain a Conflict, not only with the Terrors of Conscience and Agonies of Death, but with all the Powers of Hell, then doth the *Holy Spirit* of God cheer up and assist every good Man, revive his Heart, and refresh his Soul, by giving him some extraordinary Assurance of God's Favour, and a delightful Prospect of his happy Condition hereafter.

THUS,

SERM. THUS, when that holy Martyr, St. Stephen, was in the greatest Straights and Agonies, and was offering up his Life for a Testimony to the Truth of the Gospel, then lifting up his Eyes towards Heaven, by a strong and vigorous Faith, he saw the Son of Man *standing at the Right-hand of God*, ready to receive his expiring Soul.

Acts vii.  
55.

THESE are some of those many Resemblances, which Fire bears to the Effects and Operations of the *Holy Spirit*, which may serve to make out and illustrate the Aptness of the Metaphor made Use of in the Text, and give us some Light in our Search after what is meant, by *quenching the Holy Spirit* of God.

Now, *quenching the Holy Spirit* must denote to us, the resisting and restraining the Motions of God's *Holy Spirit*, the doing something whereby we render ourselves incapable of receiving them or being influenced by them, and whereby we provoke God to leave us to ourselves, and to afford us no more of his Breathings and Inspirations: As Fire is *quenched* when the Action of Heat ceases, and there is no more Fuel fit for it to work upon.

Now there are different Degrees of *quenching the Holy Spirit*. For the Operation

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tions of God's *Holy Spirit* may be only intercepted for some Time, as Fire may be covered up in Ashes, or the Sun may suffer an Eclipse: Or else we may provoke God to withdraw his *Holy Spirit* totally and finally from us, and to give us up to the Rule and Government of our evil Inclinations, so that there may not be one Spark left within us of Goodness and Holiness, as Fire may be quite extinguished and put out.

SERM.  
XV.

THIS being the plain Sense and Meaning of the Words, they will afford us these following Considerations,

- I. THAT we may so far grieve God's *Holy Spirit*, as to provoke him to give us up to the Government of our own vile Inclinations, and deprive ourselves of the blessed Influences of his Grace and Assistance.
- II. WHAT Courses those are which reduce a Man to this dangerous and deplorable Condition.
- III. WHEREIN the Misery and Danger of this Condition doth consist.
- IV. BY what Marks we may judge of the Condition of our own Souls, and know whether we have thus quenched the *Holy Spirit*.

V. WHICH

SERM. V. WHICH are the most proper Means  
 XV. to keep up the mutual Intercourse between God and our Souls, and to preserve them from this desperate Condition of *quenching the Holy Spirit* of God.

I. THAT we may so far grieve God's *Holy Spirit*, as to provoke him to give us up to the Government of our vile Inclinations, and deprive ourselves of the blessed Influences of his Grace and Assistance. This is, indeed, supposed in the Text, and in many other Places of the Holy Scripture, and is in some Measure agreed to, on all Hands. All those who believe that there is an *Holy Spirit*, who enlightens the Minds of Men, sanctifies their Affections, and governs their Passions, must needs acknowledge, that by our good and evil Deeds he may be either pleased or displeased; that he takes Delight to dwell with the Meek and Lowly, the Humble and Contrite, the Holy and Devout; and that he loaths and abhors the Wicked and Impure, the Sensual and Profane, the Heart that is become a *Cage of unclean Birds*, of evil Desires and Affections; this, I say, is agreed to on all Hands: But the Question is, whether these Gifts  
 and

and Graces may be so utterly lost as ne- SERM.  
 ver to be regained? Whether a Man who XV.  
 has once been wrought upon by the *Holy*  
*Spirit* of God, and has changed his Course  
 of Life, and has for some Time walked  
 in the Ways of Virtue and Religion, and  
 has had the Gifts and Graces of God's *Holy*  
*Spirit* communicated to him, and wrought  
 in his Soul, can ever fall away and finally  
 miscarry? This is the Question; and  
 though many good Men, and eminent Di-  
 vines, have resolved it in the Negative, yet  
 the Affirmative seems to me most agree-  
 able to the Design of the *Apostle* in the  
 Text, and of many other Places in the  
 Holy Scriptures; I shall only mention two  
 of them: We are told that Men may be  
 enlightened, and taste the heavenly Gift, Heb. vi.  
 and be made Partakers of the Holy Ghost, 4. 5. 6.  
 and taste the good Word of God, and the  
 Powers also of the World to come, and yet  
 so fall away as not possibly to be renewed  
 by Repentance: And this is confirmed by  
 that parallel Place of St. Peter, that Men,  
 after they have known the Way of Righte- 2 Pet. ii.  
 ousness, may turn from the holy Command- 20. 21.  
 ment delivered unto them; and, after they  
 have escaped the Pollutions of this World,  
 through the Knowledge of the Lord and Sa-  
 viour Jesus Christ, they may again be en-  
 tangled



SERM. *tangled therein and overcome, so as their*  
 XV. *latter End shall be worse than their Begin-*  
*ning.*

IT is therefore very plain and evident, that Men may either comply with the Inspirations of God's *Holy Spirit*, and blow up this Holy Fire, or else stifle and quench it; for God deals with us like free Agents, exhorting and intreating us to comply with his Will and obey his Commands; but puts no Force or Compulsion upon us; it is our Part to take Heaven by Force, and, by the Artillery of our Supplications and Prayers, to gain a Passage through the *straight Gate* that leads to eternal Happiness. Our Condition in this Life is a State of Trial; we are here Probationers and Candidates for Eternity, and placed in this World to see how we will demean ourselves; and according as we behave ourselves, and manage those Talents committed to our Trust, we shall be either rewarded or punished in the next. And it is for this Reason we are so frequently exhorted in the Holy Scripture to take Heed that there be not in us a *Heart of Unbelief*, in departing from the living God; that we do not quench the *Holy Spirit*, but that we hold out and persevere to the End, for them,

Heb. iii.  
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*Of quenching the Spirit.*

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then, and then only, we shall obtain a SERM.  
Crown of Life. XV.

GOD leaves it in our own Power to make ourselves either eternally happy, or eternally miserable, according to that noted Passage in the Father, *Qui creavit te sine te, non salvabit te sine te*: Take Notice of this, O Man, that he, who created thee without thy Concurrence, will not save thee without thine own Endeavours. It is he who gives thee Power both to will and do, but you must exert this Power, and must will and do those Things which God hath enabled you to perform. It is he who kindles this holy Flame in your Soul, but you must take Care you do not *quench* and extinguish it; and this brings me to the next General proposed,

II. To consider by what Means the *Holy Spirit* is *quenched*, and what Courses those are which reduce a Man to this dangerous and deplorable Condition,

I. By Sloth and Negligence, by a Disuse of those Gifts and Graces which God has bestowed upon us; by neglecting to improve them, and to make Use of those Opportunities which God has put into our Hands; when, like the unprofitable Servant, we wrap our Talents in a Napkin,  
Y and,

**SERM.** and, with the *foolish Virgins*, suffer our  
**XV.** *Lamps to go out*, for Want of trimming  
 them with the *Oil* of good Works, and  
 the Performance of the Exercises of De-  
 votion; when we omit the Duties of Re-  
 ligion, either in Public or Private; when  
 we neglect Praying to God, Hearing his  
 Word, and Meditating on it; this is, in  
 Effect, to *quench the Holy Spirit* of God.  
 And, let any one observe it well, and he  
 shall find it true, that, every Time he o-  
 mits the Performance of his Devotions,  
 the Devil gains Ground of him, and he  
 loses much of that Zeal and Fervency,  
 with which he was endow'd before: The  
 Reason of which is this, because the Du-  
 ties of Religion are the proper Means  
 which God has appointed to convey his  
 Grace into our Souls, whereby our spiritual  
 Life is nourished, and we are rendered  
 more active and vigorous in the Service  
 of God; and therefore it is no Wonder  
 that our spiritual Strength should languish  
 and decay, when we with-hold the spiri-  
 tual Food of our Souls.

2. *THE Spirit* may be *quenched* by inter-  
 cepting its Light and Heat, and (as in  
 Fire) we may be deprived of all Use and  
 Benefit of the Light, by interposing some-  
 thing



*Of quenching the Spirit.*

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thing between it; and the Object; or placing it under a Bushel. When Men apply their Minds too much to any lawful Profit or Pleasure; when their Thoughts are taken up continually with it, and their Affections too deeply engaged in the Pursuit of it: The Motions of God's *Holy Spirit* are hindered, and his Inspirations intercepted, so that they cannot obtain Admittance into the Soul. SERM. XV.

3. THE *Holy Spirit* may be quenched by an actual Suppression of it; by the Commission of any wilful and presumptuous Sin; for, as Fire is quenched by throwing Water upon it, which is of a contrary Nature and has different Qualities; so the *Holy Spirit* is most properly said to be quenched, when by wicked Thoughts, Words, and Actions we introduce different Qualities into the Soul; when we act directly contrary to its holy Motions and Inspirations; and our Mind is filled with sinful and impure Thoughts, our Heart with evil and corrupt Affections, and our Lives led in open Opposition to the Laws of God: For by every wicked Thought that we conceive, Word that we speak, or Action that we perform, we grieve God's *Holy Spirit*; and,

SERM. the more we thus grieve him, the farther  
 XV. he departs from us, till, at last, he gives us  
 up wholly to ourselves, and leaves us to  
 the Conduct of our own sinful Desires  
 and Affections, and suffers us to commit  
 Sin with Greediness, without any Manner  
 of Restraint.

III. How dangerous a Condition this  
 is, is what I proposed, in the next Place, to  
 make out unto you, and that from these  
 following Considerations :

I. BECAUSE it is a Sin of the deepest  
 Dye. The *Quenching God's Holy Spirit*,  
 in what Degree soever it is, involves in it  
 the most aggravating Circumstances ; it is  
 a Sin committed against Knowledge, a-  
 gainst the Checks and Admonitions of a  
 Man's Conscience, persevered in wilfully  
 and obstinately ; which very much en-  
 hances the Guilt of it. What monstrous  
 Ingratitude must that Man be guilty of,  
 who turns a deaf Ear to the Admoni-  
 tions of God's *Holy Spirit*, resists his Im-  
 portunities, disobeys his Counsels, and  
 goes on obstinately in a sinful Course  
 of Life, notwithstanding the clearest Con-  
 victions of his own Conscience to the  
 Contrary ? What higher Provocation of  
 God can there be, than not only to  
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trample under Foot the precious Blood of SERM.  
the Covenant, and to count it an unholy XV.  
Thing ; but also to do Despight to the  
Spirit of Grace, and to drive him away  
from us ; which whosoever obstinately  
persists in, will, at last, arrive at the Height  
of Impiety, that Sin against the Holy  
Ghost, which will never be remitted in  
in this World, nor in the next, *i. e.* doth  
not admit of Pardon and Forgiveness ;  
for the Sin against the Holy Ghost is with  
very good Reason thought to be, when  
a Man has continued so long in a wil-  
ful, obstinate, and perverse Course of Sin-  
ing, that he has quite extinguished every  
Spark of a Spiritual Life in his Soul, and  
quite lost the Sense of Good and Evil ;  
when he has so long grieved the Holy  
Spirit, that he utterly leaves and for-  
sakes him, and gives him up to Hard-  
ness of Heart, and Searedness of Consci-  
ence, which as it is the highest Degree of  
Guilt in this Life, so will it,

2. BE punished with the most intense  
Torments in the Life to come ; for  
Punishment doth as naturally follow Guilt,  
as the Shadow doth the Body ; and,  
though it doth not always keep Pace with  
it in this World, yet it will certainly



SERM. overtake it in the next, and the Wicked shall be punished, as well as the Just rewarded, according to their Deeds. There will be Degrees of Torments in Hell, and though the least Degree of Torment there, will be too heavy for human Nature to bear, unless subtilised and refined, and preserved in Being by the omnipotent Arm of God, yet some Degrees of Torment, when compared with others, may be said to be more tolerable; but the bitterest Cup will certainly be given to those Sinners, the full Vials of God's Wrath will be poured out against them, who have been most impudently wicked, and, in these Times of Light and Knowledge, have not the least Excuse for their Sins, nor the least Circumstance to extenuate their Guilt. But,

3. THE Condition of those Persons, who *quench the Holy Spirit*, is so much the more dangerous, because there is so much Difficulty in repenting of this Sin; so much Danger, that a Man, who is fallen into this desperate Condition, should never be able to repent of it and obtain Mercy; for every wilful and presumptuous Sin, which a Man commits, doth strangely waste and harden the

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the Conscience, and the Continuance in SERM.  
 these Sins doth in a great Measure de- XV.  
 prive us of the blessed Influences of God's  
*Holy Spirit* ; so that a Man, who is  
 given up to the Enjoyment of any fin-  
 ful Lust or unlawful Pleasure, may well  
 be said to be *dead in Trespases and Sins* ;  
 he has neither Will nor Power to move  
 himself, or to exercise any vital Action.  
 It is therefore for this Reason that the  
 Conversion of a hardened and thorough-  
 paced Sinner is, in the Holy Scripture,  
 represented as a Work of so great Dif-  
 ficulty. It is compared to Things abso-  
 lutely impossible to be performed, the  
 Washing the Blackmoor white, and Clear-  
 ing the *Leopard* of his *Spots*, to denote,  
 at least, the extreme Difficulty of it.  
 The Work of Regeneration in the Soul  
 of a Man, is described by the most vi-  
 sible Instances of God's Power, the Crea-  
 tion of the World ; and therefore it is  
 expressed by the Making of a *new Heaven*  
*and a new Earth*, by that wonderful Act  
 of God's Omnipotence, the Formation of  
 an Infant in the Womb ; it is called a *new*  
*Birth*, and those, who are thus changed,  
 are said to be new Men ; so difficult a

SERM. Matter is it for those to do well, who  
XV. are accustomed to do Evil.

By all which it appears into how hazardous, and almost desperate, a Condition those Men reduce themselves, who wilfully and obstinately continue in the Commission of any known Sin; and therefore, that we may all avoid Falling into this deplorable Condition, God of his infinite Mercy grant, through *Jesus Christ* our only Lord and Saviour.

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## S E R M O N XVI.

The Hazard and Folly of depriving  
ourselves wholly of the Influences  
of God's Holy Spirit.

1 T H E S S. V. 19.

*Quench not the Spirit.*

**F**ROM these Words I have already SERM.  
XVI.  
shewn you,

I. **T H A T** we may so far *grieve* God's *Holy Spirit*, as to provoke him to give us up to the Government of our own vile Inclinations, and deprive ourselves of the blessed Influences of his Grace and Assistance.

II. **W H A T** Courses those are which reduce a Man to this dangerous and deplorable Condition.

III. **W H E R E I N** the Misery and Danger of this Condition doth consist.

I P R O -

SERM. I PROCEED NOW,

XVI. IV. To lay down some Marks, by which every one may examine his own Heart, and certainly know what the Condition of his Soul is, whether he has *quenched the Holy Spirit*, or not. And this will appear, by considering whether he is destitute of those Properties which accompany the Spirit of God, and which he produces in the Soul of every good Man? Whether the Fruits and Effects of the *Holy Spirit* are wrought in him? Now the Works of the *Flesh* are manifest, such as are *Adultery, Fornication, Uncleanneſs, Laſciviuſneſs, Idolatry, Witchcraft, Hatred, Variance, Emulations, Wrath, Strife, Seditions, Heresies, Envyings, Murders, Drunkenneſs, Revellings, and ſuch like*: But the Fruit of the Spirit is *Love, Joy, Peace, Long-ſuffering, Gentleneſs, Goodneſs, Faith, Meekneſs, Temperance*. If, therefore, we find in ourſelves Want of Love both to God and our Neighbour; if we have no filial Affection unto God, no grateful Reſentment of his infinite Mercies vouchſafed unto us, in ſending his only begotten Son, out of his Boſom, to die for us; if we are not troubled and grieved for the Offending of him, but our Hearts are hardened more and more in our Sins, and we ſeek

Gal. v.  
21, 22.

to

to avoid not the Guilt of our Sins, but the SERM.  
Punishment only of them; if our Love to XVI.  
our Neighbour doth not flow from the  
Love of God, but from some bye and  
worldly Respects; if we never practise  
this Duty, but when it is for our Interest  
and Advantage, and are of a malicious,  
envious, and revengeful Temper; then it  
is a Sign that the *Holy Spirit* is not the  
ruling and governing Principle of our Souls.  
If there is not Joy and Peace in our Mind,  
that is, an inward Complacency and Sa-  
tisfaction, in Walking according to the  
Rules of Religion, and Dictates of right  
Reason; if we do not enjoy Peace of  
Conscience and Quiet of Mind, by cur-  
bing, our unruly Appetites and Affec-  
tions, and approving ourselves unto God  
in well Doing; it is a Sign that the *Ho-  
ly Spirit* hath not taken up his Residence  
in our Souls. Farther, if we have not  
a stedfast Belief, and an holy Reverence  
for the Word of God, and that which  
is contained therein; if we are not fully  
persuaded in our Minds of the Truth  
of those Things, which God has reveal-  
ed to us, and, without any Manner of  
Hesitancy and Reserve, can submit our  
Reason to our Faith, and believe what  
we cannot comprehend; it is a Sign that  
we



SERM. we are not enlightened by the *Holy Spirit*.  
 XVI. *rit*, neither hath he set his Seal to us;

and to compleat all, if we do not transcribe the Precepts of the Gospel into our Lives and Conversations, if we do not yield a sincere and universal Obedience to the whole Will of God; if our Thoughts are not much upon God and religious Things; if we have not glorious Ideas of God's Goodness, and awful Thoughts of his Majesty and Power; if our Words are not such as are *seasoned with Salt*, and our Discourse tending unto Edification, to advance the Glory of God, and the Good of others; if Justice, Temperance, and Sobriety do not appear in our Actions, we may assure ourselves, that we are not actuated by the *Holy Spirit* of God, nor is this holy Flame kindled in our Souls.

ON the Contrary, let us make never such bold Pretences to the Gifts and Graces of God's *Holy Spirit*; yet if the Works of the Flesh appear in our Lives and Conversations, and our own Hearts and Consciences accuse and condemn us, that we do not walk answerable to so pure and holy a Principle; though we may put on the Mask of Religion and deceive Men, yet we can have no Confidence towards God. Carnal and sensual

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usual Affections, furious and ungovernable SERM.  
 Passions, a wicked and ungodly Life, are XVI.  
 certain Signs that the *Spirit* of God is *quenched* in us ; and, when the *Spirit* of  
 God is *quenched* in a Man, into what a  
 miserable Estate is he fallen ? Imagine  
 yourselves in a Dungeon in the very Bowels  
 of the Earth, extremely dark, without any  
 Glimmering of Light, and extremely cold  
 without any Spark of Heat, full of veno-  
 mous Toads and Serpents, ready to de-  
 vour you ; just such, so uncouth, so dis-  
 mal is the Soul of Man, in whom the  
*Spirit* of God is *quenched* ; nothing but  
 horrible Darkness, astonishing Cold, and  
 ugly, frightful Sins, and the most desperate  
 Gastliness of eternal Death are to be found  
 there : There is nothing but Stench and  
 Rottenness, all Manner of Wickedness, and  
 Hardness of Heart, no Manner of Love  
 to God and his Word, no Trust in his  
 Promises, no particular Application of his  
 Mercies, no Comfort of Conscience, no  
 Peace of Mind, but a perpetual Terror,  
 because of a Judgment to come, a most  
 slavish Fear of Death, which makes us  
 all our Life-time subject unto Bondage,  
 and a terrible Expectation of Vengeance,  
 which God has prepared for the Devil  
 and

SERMON. and his Angels, and unspeakable Torments in Hell-fire to Eternity.

I DO not say, that this is the Condition of every one who has been guilty of any one wilful Sin ; but do affirm, that this is the Condition of every Person, who goes on in a wilful Course of Sinning, who allows himself in it, and doth not break off Sinning, by a speedy hearty, and unfeigned Repentance, and hereby obtains God's Pardon and Remission of his Sin.

QUITE contrary to this deplorable Condition is the happy Estate of him, in whom the Spirit of God takes up his Abode. For that *Holy Spirit* purifies the Mind and Soul of a Man ; he casts out all corrupt Desires and Affections, and all ungovernable Passions, so that he becomes of a meek, humble, and peaceable Temper ; he fills the Soul full of devout Thoughts and holy Affections, and begets in him such an heavenly Frame and Temper, that, though his Body remains on the Earth, yet he seems to have his Conversation in Heaven ; and from this *Abundance of the Heart* his *Mouth speaketh*, and his *Hands act* ; he takes Delight in praying to and praising God, and performing the several Exercises of  
Devo-



Devotion ; he hates and abhors every SERM.  
evil Way, and, to the utmost of his XVI.  
Power, yields an universal Obedience to  
all the Commands of God. If we find  
in ourselves these Fruits and Effects of  
the *Holy Spirit*, we may be assured that  
he dwells in us, and we in him, and that  
we live under his Conduct and Directi-  
on ; which brings me to consider,

V. and Lastly, By what Means we  
may procure and keep up the mutual  
Intercourse between God and our Souls,  
and preserve ourselves out of this dange-  
rous Condition of *quenching the Holy Spi-*  
*rit* of God. And here I shall consider,

First, WHAT Means are most proper  
to obtain the *Holy Spirit*.

Secondly, WHAT, to keep him, when  
obtained. And,

Thirdly, WHAT, to engage him to re-  
turn to us, when we have grieved him,  
and he is departed from us.

First. WHAT we must do to obtain  
the *Holy Spirit*. And,

(1.) WE ought to qualify ourselves  
with suitable Dispositions for the receiv-  
ing the *Holy Spirit*. God has vouchsafed  
to all Men the Means of Salvation, so  
that

SERM. that no Man can perish everlastingly; but

XVI. through his own Default ; and, under the  
 Gospel-dispensation, God has poured out  
 the more plentiful Effusions of his *Holy Spirit*, upon those Nations which enjoy  
 the glorious Light of the Gospel ; so that  
 there is no Man but has frequent Calls  
 to Repentance, *the Holy Spirit* breathing in-  
 to his Mind holy Desires, and inspiring  
 his Soul with good Motions, which will  
 be fruitful, if we have fitted and prepar-  
 ed our Hearts to receive them. The  
*Holy Spirit* is a *Spirit of Love* ; he is  
 wonderful sollicitous and desirous of the  
 Good and eternal Salvation of all Men ;  
 he wooes, exhorts, and intreats us to be  
 happy, and to comply with the kind Pur-  
 poses of his Love towards us ; he en-  
 courages the Beginnings of Goodness, and  
 blows up the least Spark of Virtue in  
 our Souls ; he will not break the bruised  
 Reed, nor quench the smoaking Flax ; yet  
 all his Endeavours will be ineffectual, he  
 will never stay with us, or make his A-  
 bode in our Hearts, unless they are in  
 some Measure fitted for his Reception, and  
 furnished with such Qualifications as he  
 requires. That Preparation, which is re-  
 quired for the Reception of the *Holy Spi-  
 rit*, is in the Gospel expressed by an *honest*  
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and good Heart, such as is, indeed, inconsistent with an unregenerate State, but is absolutely necessary to make the good Seed of the Word take Root in our Souls. Now, this good Temper of Mind, and Honesty of Heart, doth consist in a meek and humble Frame of Spirit, in the Teachableness of the Understanding and Tractableness of the Wit; by the former of which a Man is prepared to yield to the Truth, though it prove contrary to his present Opinions; and by the latter to submit to any Divine Law, though it makes something to be his Duty, that is contrary to his former Practices. And, therefore, it is observable, that our Saviour so frequently recommends to us a meek and humble Frame of Spirit, and honours it with the Testimonies of his Approbation. Thus, when he invites Sinners to come to him, *Learn of me, for I am meek and lowly*; intimating, that the first Virtue, wherein they were to imitate him, was Humility. Again, we find our Saviour taking the little Children to him; the Reason he gives, for so doing, is very remarkable: *For (says he) of such is the Kingdom of Heaven*; of such who are like those, gentle, pliable, and easy to be instructed. *Verily, I say unto you, Whosoever shall not receive the Kingdom*

SERM.

XVI.

Mark x.

14.

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dom



SERM. *dom of God as a little Child, he shall not*

XVI. *enter therein, i. e.* Whosoever is not prepared by a meek and flexible Disposition, will never receive the Gospel, nor will the Operations of the *Holy Spirit* have any Effect on him; and therefore, our Saviour began his Divine Sermon on the Mount with blessing the *Poor in Spirit*, those that have an humble Opinion of themselves, because they were prepared to embrace all his following Instructions. But,

(2.) THIS Preparedness of Mind must be accompanied with an Attendance on the public Ordinances of Religion. He, that is desirous to obtain the Gifts and Graces of God's *Holy Spirit*, must (like the infirm Persons at the *Pool of Bethesda*) diligently attend, till the *Spirit* of God moves upon these Waters of the Sanctuary; for the public Duties of Religion are the Means which God has appointed to convey his Grace into our Souls, which whosoever neglects, vainly expects that God should use any extraordinary Means for his Illumination and Conviction.

Secondly, WHEN we have obtained the *Holy Spirit*, let us endeavour to keep him, and to prevail with him to fix his Abode with us.

(1.) WHEN

(1.) WHEN we find this holy Fire is SERM.  
kindled within us, by a Coal from the XVI.  
Altar, let us use all our Endeavours to  
blow it up into a Flame; and, to this  
End, let us make Use of the Breath of  
heartly and fervent Prayer, the unuttera-  
ble Groans of a Soul truly thirsting after  
Righteousness, the heavenly Ejaculations  
of a Mind continually lifted up unto God,  
the ravishing Apprehensions of Bliss in a  
Heart wholly extasied with Love to God,  
and Charity to our Neighbour.

(2.) LET us continually feed this holy  
Fire, and daily trim our Lamps with the Oil  
of good Works, in all Manner of holy Con-  
versation and Godliness; addicting, practising  
and inuring ourselves to think, and speak,  
and do nothing but what is pleasing in the  
Sight of God, and profitable to our Souls;  
in a Word, as the Apostle prescribes, just  
before and after the Text, *following that  
which is good, both among ourselves and to  
all Men, and abstaining from all Appearance  
of Evil, rejoicing evermore, praying with-  
out Ceasing, giving Thanks in all Things.*  
We must continually make Use of this  
Fire to consume all worldly Lusts, to in-  
flame and heighten all Manner of Zeal,  
giving no Place to the Devil, nor Oppor-  
tunity to his Temptations. When we go

SERM. to Bed, we must commit our Souls to  
 XVI. God, in Prayer; and, when we awake,  
 we must awake with the Lord, in devout  
 Prayers and Ejaculations; and, all the Day  
 long, possess our Minds with the Fear of  
 God, and fill up all the vacant Minutes  
 and Intervals of our Time, with heavenly  
 Meditations. These are the Means by  
 which we may keep the *Holy Spirit*, and  
 prevail with him to dwell with us, and  
 take up his Abode in our Hearts. But if,  
 by any wilful and presumptuous Sin, we  
 have grieved the *Holy Spirit*, and he takes  
 away the Light of his Countenance from  
 us, and nothing but Darkness and Gloomi-  
 ness appears in our Soul, the Fears of God's  
 Displeasure, and Terrors of Conscience,  
 what Means are we to use to regain his  
 Favour, and to recall his Presence? This  
 is what I am to consider.

*Thirdly*, Now the best Means to regain  
 the comfortable Presence of the *Holy Spi-  
 rit* of God, when he has withdrawn him-  
 self from us, is, in the first Place, to put  
 away that *accursed Thing* which grieved  
 him, and provoked him to depart from us;  
 to cleanse our Soul from all Filthiness, both  
 of Flesh and Spirit, and to wash ourselves  
 white and clean by the Tears of an hearty  
 and sincere Repentance. Let us humble  
 ourselves



ourselves before our God, for these our SERM.  
 manifold Sins and Transgressions, and XVI.  
 give God the Glory of his wonderful  
 Mercy, Long-suffering, and Forbearance,  
 but take to ourselves Shame and Confusion  
 of Face. Let us blow up in our Souls  
 the Sparks of an holy Zeal for God's  
 Glory, and endeavour to serve him more  
 sincerely for the Time to come; and if  
 we do thus, though God may hide his  
 Face from us for a little, yet he will *re-*  
*turn and leave a Blessing behind him.* He  
 knows, that we are but *Dust*, and there-  
 fore will be merciful to our Sins, and par-  
 don our Iniquities.

AND now what remains, but that we  
 make a right Improvement of what has  
 been said, for the Government of our  
 Lives and Conversations? That we be  
 careful and vigilant, and stand upon our  
 Guard, that our Adversary, the Devil, may  
 have no Advantage over us; that we take  
 particular Care, lest, by any presumptuous  
 Sin, we grieve God's *Holy Spirit*, and,  
 provoke him to depart from us and leave  
 us to ourselves; that we cherish his holy  
 Motions and Inspirations, by hearkening  
 to them and complying with them; and  
 whenever we have good Thoughts spring  
 up in our Souls, that we improve them

SERM. by Meditation, fix them upon our Memories, and transcribe them into our Lives and Conversations : That we frequently enquire into the Condition of our own Souls, that we may know whether we *grow in Grace*, and improve in all the Virtues of a spiritual Life ; or, whether these languish and decay in us, and our Hearts grow more hardened in a wicked and ungodly Life ; and, lastly, if we have offended God and grieved his *Holy Spirit*, and for some Time have gone on in a sinful Course of Life, that we never cease praying and weeping, performing Acts of Contrition and Revenge upon ourselves, amending our Lives, and humbling ourselves before God, till we have gained some competent Assurance, our Sins are blotted out, and we have regained the Love and Favour of the Almighty : Which God of his Mercy grant to us all, for *Jesus Christ* his Sake,

S E R M O N

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# S E R M O N XVII.

## The Mission of the Holy Ghost.

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JOHN xiv. 26.

*But the Comforter, which is the Holy Ghost, whom the Father will send in my Name, he shall teach you all Things, and bring all Things to your Remembrance, whatsoever I have said unto you.*

**O**UR Saviour Christ, knowing, SERM.  
*that his Hour was come, that* XVII.  
*he should depart out of this World* John xiii.  
*to his Father, prepares the*

Minds of his Disciples before-hand, that they might bear the Loss of him the better, by telling them what must happen; that he must shortly leave the World and be taken away from them; and therefore he exhorts them to remember those Things he had taught them, to conti-



SERM. nue stedfast in his Doctrine, to practise  
 XVII. his Precepts, to live in the strictest Bonds  
 of Love and Friendship one with another,  
 and not to be dejected or cast down for  
 the Loss of their Master; and that he  
 might the better support their drooping  
 Spirits, and comfort them, he assures them  
 that he will come again, and, in the  
 mean While, will send the Comforter, who  
 shall supply all their Wants, answer all  
 their Necessities, and enable them to per-  
 form their Duty; for, though it was ab-  
 solutely necessary that he should go away,  
 yet he assures them that *the Comforter*  
*who is the Holy Ghost, whom the Fa-*  
*ther will send in my Name, he shall teach*  
*you all Things, and bring all Things to*  
*your Remembrance, whatsoever I have said*  
*unto you.* In which Words are contain-  
 ed,

- I. A PROMISE of *sending the Holy Spi-*  
*rit.*
- II. A DESCRIPTION of his Person; he  
 is called *the Holy Ghost and the Com-*  
*forter.*
- III. THE End of his Message; to *teach*  
 his Disciples *all Things*, and to *bring*  
 to their *Remembrance whatsoever* he  
 had *said unto them.*

I. HERE

I. HERE is a Promise of *sending* the SERM.  
*Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in XVII.*  
*my Name; i. e.* that upon his Prayers and  
Intercession, and for the Sake of his Me-  
rits, he would make a more plentiful Ef-  
fusion of his *Holy Spirit*, upon the Hearts  
and Souls of such Persons, who were  
fitly prepared and disposed for the receiv-  
ing of it, than hitherto he had done; that  
this should be transacted in a solemn and  
open Manner, and continue with his  
Church until his second Coming; which  
Promise was performed forty Days after  
his Resurrection, and ten Days after his  
Ascension. *And when the Day of Pentecost* Acts ii.  
*was fully come, they were all with one Ac-* 1 and 9.  
*cord in one Place: And suddenly there came*  
*a Sound from Heaven, as of a rushing*  
*mighty Wind, and it filled all the House*  
*where they were sitting; and there appear-*  
*ed unto them cloven Tongues, like as of*  
*Fire, and it sat upon each of them; and*  
*they were all filled with the Holy Ghost,*  
*and began to speak with other Tongues, as*  
*the Spirit gave them Utterance.* The  
*rushing Wind* and the *fiery Tongues* were  
the sensible Symbols, by which God de-  
clared, that this was the Time when  
the *Holy Ghost* would take upon him, in  
a more peculiar Manner, the Government  
and

SERM. and Guidance of the Church, and what  
 XVII. would be the Effects of his Coming a-  
 mongst us, what those Gifts and Graces  
 were, which he would bestow upon the  
 Sons of Men.

IT must be confessed, that the *Holy Spirit* was always present with the Church, even from the Beginning of the World ;  
 Gen. i. 2. he is said to *move upon the Face of the*  
 ib. vi. 3. *Waters*, and to *strive with Mankind*. Our Saviour *Christ* was conceived of the *Holy Ghost*, and he *breathed the Spirit* upon the *Apostles* ; but yet the more visible and glorious Communication of the *Holy Spirit*, the more plentiful Effusion of his Gifts and Graces, was reserved to the Day of *Pentecost*, at which Time that  
 John xx. 22. Prophecy of *Joel* was fulfilled : *And it shall come to pass afterwards, that I will pour out my Spirit upon all Flesh, &c.* This was the Time when the *Holy Ghost*, the third Person in the Trinity, made his glorious Appearance amongst the Sons of Men, giving them a more clear and high Idea of their Duty, and more powerful Assistances to perform it, hereby engaging them to the Observance of his Laws.

UNDER the Law, God the Father manifested himself to the World, the  
*Jews*



*Jews* were then under a Theocracy, the SERM.  
Law was delivered from Mount *Sinai* XVII.  
in Thunderings and Lightnings; thus he  
governed them for many Years, he was  
their God and their King; he went be-  
fore them in all their Enterprizes, and  
gave them Victory over all their Ene-  
mies; but when they had forgot the  
God which brought them out of the  
Land of *Egypt*, with so many Signs and  
Wonders; when not only the whole *Hea-*  
*then* World, but even God's peculiar Peo-  
ple had corrupted themselves, and became  
grossly ignorant of their Duty, and en-  
slaved to Vice, and thereby obnoxious to  
the woeful Consequences of it, severe  
Punishment and extreme Misery; when  
Things were brought to this Pass, by  
making the Traditions of their Elders  
of equal Authority with the Holy Scrip-  
tures, that they came to place Holiness  
in the Circumcision of the Flesh, clean  
Hands and a decent Attire, and were so far  
debauched in their Principles, as to think the  
Dedicating their Substance to God, or to  
declare their Intention of doing so, would  
excuse them from Works of Charity, or  
Giving Relief even to their languishing and  
distressed Parents. When the *Heathens* Mat. xv.  
came to err so grossly concerning the Ob-  
ject 5. 6.

SERM. ject of their Worship, the Divine Nature,  
 XVII. as to make Gods not only of their deceased Princes and Benefactors, but even of the Herbs that grew in their Gardens, and to make their Idols out of the same Wood that roasted their Meat and burnt their Sacrifices; when the Morals both of *Jew* and *Gentile* were so far depraved, that they had lost all the Notions of Justice and Honesty, and thought it no Oppression or Violence, to seize upon any Thing which belonged to a Stranger, and confined not only their Charity, but their Justice and Mercy, to those of their own People and Nation; then it pleased God out of his wonderful Goodness, to reveal his Design of recovering Mankind out of this dangerous State and desperate Condition, and to propose the most wise and efficacious Expedient imaginable, to redeem them from the Tyranny of Sin and the Terror of everlasting Punishments; to reconcile them to his Justice, and to recover them into a more happy State than that in which they were at first created; and this he effected by sending his only beloved Son out of his Bosom into the World, and by him inviting Sinners to partake of his Mercy, assuring them, that, by the Sacrifice of his

his Death and Passion, he was fully satisfied for all their Sins, ready to seal their Pardon, and, upon the most easy and reasonable Conditions imaginable, to admit them into a State of Innocency and Happiness; that he desired only, that they would forsake their vicious Lives and Courses, that they would embrace the Overtures of his Mercy, and, to the utmost of their Power, live in Obedience to his Laws. Thus, as St. Paul tells us, *The Grace of God, which bringeth Salvation, hath appeared to all Men; teaching us, that denying Ungodliness and worldly Lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly in this present World.* SERM. XVII.

*Tit. ii.  
11, 12.*

AND now, having put the Government upon his Shoulder, who was mighty to save, and having given him all Power both in Heaven and Earth, one would have thought there had been no more to do, and that the great Work of Man's Salvation had been finished and consummated; but we find that even such efficacious Means as these had not the desired Effect upon the Jews, they blasphemed his Doctrine and the Wonders which he wrought amongst them, they reviled and persecuted him, they put him at last to a shameful and ignominious Death: And yet God did not wholly leave them



SERM. them off; there remained another Witness behind still; *viz.* The third Person in the Blessed Trinity, who takes his Turn, and endeavours, by all wise and reasonable Means, to convince the World that *Jesus* was the *Christ*; to prevail with them to believe his Doctrine and practise his Precepts, and by many Signs and Wonders which he wrought amongst them, by a still Voice and secret Whisperings and Inspirations, by convincing their Judgments, inclining their Wills, and sanctifying their Affections; by furnishing their Hearts with pious and holy Desires, by defending them from the Snarcs and Temptations of the evil One, by blowing up every Spark of Virtue and Holiness which he finds in their Souls, to make them his *peculiar People*, and to reinstate them in the Favour of God.

THUS we see that every Person in the Holy Trinity has endeavoured the Safety and Welfare of Mankind, has discovered himself to the World by some gracious Indication of his Divine Philanthropy, and used the most proper Means for the Salvation of Mankind; which may serve as a Key to let us into the Meaning of that difficult Passage in the Holy Scripture,

Matt. xii. *Wherefore I say unto you, all Manner of Sin*  
31, 32. *and*

## *The Mission of the Holy Ghost.*

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*and Blasphemy shall be forgiven unto Men :* SERMON

*But the Blasphemy against the Holy Ghost* XVII.

*shall not be forgiven unto Men. And who-*

*soever speaketh a Word against the Son of*

*Man, it shall be forgiven him : But who-*

*soever speaketh against the Holy Ghost, it*

*shall not be forgiven him, neither in this*

*World, neither in the World to come. For*

*it was highly probable that those Per-*

*sons, who only knew God the Father,*

*would be wrought upon by the Coming*

*of God the Son ; the Excellency of his*

*Doctrine and the Holiness of his Life*

*were such powerful Arguments, as, one*

*would think, were impossible to be with-*

*stood ; and yet even those Men, who were*

*not convinced by these, had still another*

*Means left for their Conversion, they*

*might, perhaps, be prevailed with by that*

*Demonstration of the Spirit, that miracu-*

*lous Power of working Miracles, which*

*attended his Doctrine ; such as were Heal-*

*ing the Sick, Giving Sight to the Blind,*

*Casting out evil Spirits, Raising the Dead,*

*Discerning the Thoughts and Intents of*

*the Heart, which are expressly ascribed*

*to the Holy Spirit, If I by the Spirit cast* Matt. xii.

*out Devils, says our Saviour; and thus St.* 28.

*Paul, who was declared to be the Son of* Rom. i. 4.

*God, according to the Holy Spirit, by the Re-*

*surrection from the Dead.*

Now

SERM. Now those Persons who would not be  
 XVII. convinced by this evident Attestation, of  
 our Saviour's Quality, Commission, and  
 Doctrine, have no other Means left for  
 their Conversion ; and consequently, if they  
 continued in final Impenitency, must pe-  
 rish in their Sins. I come to consider,

II. THE Description of the Person Sent,  
 who is represented to us under these two  
 Characters.

First, HE is called *the Comforter*.

Secondly, THE *Holy Ghost*.

I. HE is called *the Comforter* ; the  
 Word in the Original, *παράκλητος*, comes from  
 a Word which has different Significations,  
 and may be rendered either *Advocate*, *Ex-  
 horter*, or *Comforter* ; and every one of  
 these do fitly accord to the several Divine  
 Offices of the *Holy Spirit* amongst the  
*Apostles* (on whom he was to descend,  
 and their Successors ever after in the Church)  
 in a more particular Manner ; and then,  
 upon all such pious and devout Souls, as  
 have him dwelling in their Hearts. The  
*Holy Ghost* is, first, an *Advocate*, and that,  
 either because he pleads for *Christ* with  
 Mankind, and demonstrates to them, that  
 he was indeed the *Messiah*, and came to  
 save the World from their Sins ; he ap-  
 plies this Truth home upon the Minds and

Con-



Consciences of such as are prepared for the SERM.  
 Reception of it, and have adorned their XVII.  
 Souls with such holy Affections, as render  
 them of a teachable Disposition; he gives  
 them effectual Evidences of the Truth of  
 those Things, and full Assurances of their  
 being accepted in the Satisfaction of *Christ*:  
 Or, in respect of us, teaching us how to plead  
 God's Cause before Men, and efficaciously  
 to convince Gainfayers: And agreeable to  
 this is the Promise of our Saviour, that he  
 would teach his *Apostles*, what they should  
 say, when they were brought before the  
 Tribunals of temporal Princes. He helps our Mat. x.  
 Ignorance in Prayer, and teaches us what to 18, 19,  
 pray for, and how to offer up our Petitions: 20.  
 He helps our Infirmities, and intercedes  
 for us with Sighs and Groans, which can-  
 not be uttered. He is an *Exhorter*, going  
 along with the *Apostles*, and, their Succes-  
 sors in the Work of their Ministry, filling  
 our Hearts with good Desires, and encou-  
 raging all our Endeavours towards the being  
 good and virtuous. He is a *Comforter* in the  
 common Notion of the Word; in the first  
 Times of the Church, when Persecution  
 raged, he bore up the Hearts of Chris-  
 tians amidst all their Sufferings; he filled  
 their Minds with spiritual Joy and Comfort,  
 and enabled them to undergo all the Pains

A a

and

SERM. and Torments their Adversaries could lay  
 XVII. upon them, with intire Resignation and Satisfaction; he still performs the same Office, towards all good Men; he comforts them under all the Troubles and Afflictions they are exposed unto in this Vale of Tears, he furnishes them with Patience to bear them, and sanctifies their Troubles unto them; he shews them that Crown of Glory which hangs over their Heads, and will by far outweigh all those light and momentary Afflictions which befall them in this Life. This is the Import of the Word *Comforter*. But,

2. HE is called *the Holy Ghost*; which denotes either, first, that he is the Fountain of all Holiness, he is holy in his own Nature, and is so called to distinguish him from all wicked and impure Spirits; or, secondly, because he communicates his Holiness and sanctifies the elect People of God, making them holy, even as he is holy. These are the several Denominations and Characters, under which, the third Person in the blessed Trinity is, in the Text, represented to us; which having dispatched, I come,

III. To shew what are the Ends and Effects of his Message, *He shall teach you all Things, and bring all Things to your Remembrance, whatsoever I have said unto you.*

you. Which Words may be understood SERM.  
 either as relating to the *Apostles*, or as denot- XVII.  
 ing the Benefits which accrued to the  
 whole Christian Church by the *Mission*  
*of the Holy Spirit*. These Words were  
 first spoken to the *Apostles*, he promises to  
*teach them all Things, i. e.* all Things  
 which were necessary for them to know,  
 for the instructing Men in the Gospel, and  
 preaching it throughout the whole World.  
 And herein are implied,

I. THAT miraculous Gift of *Tongues*  
 which was bestowed upon the *Apostles*  
 on the Day of *Pentecost*, for, without this,  
 it had been impossible for them to have  
 preached the Gospel throughout the whole  
 World; their Lives would hardly have  
 sufficed to learn the Languages of those  
 Countries they were to preach to, and,  
 without this, the Progress of the Gospel  
 must have been very slow; and therefore  
 it pleased God to bestow on them this  
 miraculous Gift, that, in whatsoever  
 Country they came, they were enabled to  
 speak the Language used there, as natural-  
 ly and fluently, as if they had been bred  
 up in that Place; which was not only of  
 wonderful Use, for the speedy Spreading  
 of the Gospel, but a mighty and con-  
 vincing Evidence, both to themselves and  
 A a 2 others



SERM. others, of the Truth of their Doctrine,  
 XVII. and that it was of Divine Original and  
 Extraction.

FOR though Men might impose upon the Ignorance of a rude and unpolished People, and pretend to work many great and lying Wonders, for the Confirmation of a false Doctrine, yet this is a Miracle which must needs be genuine, and is void of all Suspicion of Illusion or Deceit; for he that can speak in the Language of every Country where he comes, without Learning or Education, cannot perform this Miracle by any natural Means, but must receive this Power from above. I shall not dispute how far this Miracle may be counterfeited by the Devil and his Instruments, but only remark, that of all those bold Pretenders to Inspiration, which have pestered the World in these latter Ages, none of them, that I know of, have attempted to counterfeit this Gift of Tongues; and yet, were they endowed with the immediate Inspiration of the *Holy Spirit*, they might as well perform this, as any other miraculous Operation.

2. WHEN our *Saviour* promised his *Apostles*, to teach them all Things, herein is implied a full and clear Knowledge of all those Truths, which they were to preach;

preach ; for in vain had been the Gift of SERM. Tongues, if they were not inspired with XVII. those Truths, which they were to express by them ; and, since they had but an imperfect Knowledge of these Things, whilst Christ remained amongst them, therefore it was requisite that they should be more perfectly and exactly instructed by the Inspiration of the *Holy Spirit* ; for, otherwise, the Gift of Tongues had been only as *sounding Brass* and a *tinkling Cymbal*, a confused and unprofitable Noise, which brought no Pleasure nor Advantage to the Hearers of it.

3. HEREIN is also implied a Power and Ability to work Miracles, for the Confirmation of these Truths, when there was a reasonable Occasion for them ; and, to assure the World, that the Truths, which they taught, were not the Inventions of Men, but the Dictates of God's *Holy Spirit*. For every true and real Miracle is an Effect produced, which is beyond the Power of any natural Agent to perform ; Now, when such an Effect is produced, for the Confirmation of some Doctrine or Opinion, it is an evident Sign, that that Doctrine has a Divine Stamp, and is owned and confirmed by a supernatural Power. It is certain many great and amazing Wonders

SERM. have been pretended for the Confirmation  
 XVII. of a false Doctrine; but then they are  
 generally such, as may be rather termed  
 Juggling-Tricks, than real Miracles (of  
 which we have innumerable Instances a-  
 mongst the Papists) but when we see such  
 Effects wrought, as can by no Means be  
 brought to pass by any natural Agent, such  
 as are the Raising the Dead, Discovering  
 the Thoughts of the Heart, Speaking in  
 unknown Tongues, then we must ac-  
 knowledge the Finger of God, and adore  
 that Power, which has given these mira-  
 culous Gifts unto Men. These Gifts were  
 bestowed upon the *Apostles*, at the Time  
 of their receiving the *Holy Ghost*: That,  
 upon the Coming of the *Holy Ghost* on  
 them, *many Wonders and Signs were done*  
*by the Apostles*; that upon their Praying  
 to God, that he would *stretch forth his Hand*  
*to heal, and that Signs and Wonders might*  
*be done by the Name of Jesus*; God, in  
 Answer to their Prayer, *filled them with*  
*the Holy Ghost, i. e. enabled them by his*  
*Spirit to effect those Signs and Wonders*  
*they had prayed for*; these Things, then,  
 are implied in that first Part of the Promise  
 of our Saviour made to the *Apostles*.

It follows, that he would *bring to their*  
*Remembrance whatsoever he had said unto*  
*them*;

Acts ii.  
43.

Acts iv.  
30, 31.



them; by which Words our Saviour, as SERM. some conjecture with great Probability, XVII. gives a particular Order for the Writing of the Gospel, no Part of which was penned, during his Abode upon Earth: This Work was committed to the Conduct of the *Holy Spirit*, who, some Time after the Ascension of our Saviour *Christ*, inspired the holy Penmen, brought to their *Remembrance* all those Things which were material and necessary to be written, and directed and assisted them in the Composing of the Gospels, which were to be the Standard of the true Faith to future Generations, and a perfect and sufficient Rule of Practice, for the Government of Men's Lives and Conversations.

THIS is the Meaning of the Promise, with Relation to the *Apostles*, and the Professors of Christianity, in the first Ages of the Church; but if we consider it, as it bears a Relation to future Ages, it will yield us a much farther Prospect. For when the Gospel had been sufficiently preached, when its Sound had gone forth to all Parts of the then habitable World, and there was no Necessity for these miraculous Gifts; God then discontinued these extraordinary Operations, and proceeded in a more fixed and standing Method, and,

SERM. by Degrees, weaned them from those miraculous Dispensations : So, that in respect  
 to the Ages in which we live, the Promise of *teaching us all Things*, which is of the same Import with, *leading us into all Truth*, doth denote to us these following Particulars.

I. THAT the *Holy Spirit* will teach us our Duty, not by revealing to us more Mysteries, or proposing to us new Motives to apprehend them, which is the Meaning of that *new Light*, which some Men so vainly fancy they are possessed of ; but by impressing the external Light and Evidence of the Holy Scriptures upon our Understandings, by enabling us more clearly to apprehend it, and more effectually to believe it, by blessing our Studies and Endeavours, and giving us the Knowledge of these Things, which with Diligence and Industry, with fervent Prayer and serious Application, we seek after : It is the *Holy Spirit* of God, who enables us to fix our Thoughts upon Divine Truths, to keep our Contemplations steady, and conveys into our Minds such Ideas and Notices of Things, as natural Reason could never furnish us with ; and therefore the *Apostle* prays, *That the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of Glory, would give unto*

Ephes. i.  
17, 18.

unto them the Spirit of Wisdom and Revelation, in the Knowledge of him, that, the Eyes of their Understandings being enlightened, they might know what is the Hope of Christ's Calling, and what the Riches of the Glory of his Inheritance in the Saints. And, we are told, that it is by receiving the Spirit of God, that we know the Things that are freely given to us of God. SERM. XVII.

*1 Cor. ii. 12.*

2. THE Holy Spirit doth not only instruct us, what we ought to do, but also assist and enable us to perform it; he seasons the Soul of every Christian, when he enters into the Church, by Baptism, and he influences their Wills and Affections, all their Lives after. This he effects, by instilling into our Minds good Desires, and suggesting to us the powerful Motives and Arguments of Religion; by representing them in their true Light, and convincing us of the Deformity of Vice, and the ill Consequences which attend it; the Amiableness of Virtue, the Comforts which naturally result from the Practice of it, and the Excellency of those Rewards which will be the Crown of our Obedience. Such Motions as these are by the Holy Spirit set home upon our Consciences, they are often repeated and represented to our Minds; and, hereby, our hard Hearts are broken, our stubborn Wills are bent,  
our



SERM. our vile Affections and Passions are mortified, and we are inclined to walk more  
 XVII. surely in the Way of God's Commandments; and, at last, to place our greatest Pleasure and Delight in the Ways of Virtue and Religion. By the same Means the *Holy Spirit* enables us, to approve ourselves to God, in all the Instances of an holy Life: He supports us in Adversity, he keeps us humble in Prosperity, infuses Courage into us in a Time of Danger, and enables us to resist the Devil and his Temptations; he takes our Affections off from worldly Things, and renders us more active and vigorous in the Ways of Piety and Virtue. Every Man who will but attend to the Motions of his own Mind, and the Thoughts of his own Heart, will find, that he has many Times holy Thoughts darted into his Soul; that his Affections are sometimes warmed with the Love of God and Religion; that he has many Convictions on his Conscience, of the Evil of Sin; that he is sometimes strangely affected with the Sense of a Supreme Being, and a Judgment to come; these are, for the most Part, the Suggestions and Inspirations of the *Holy Spirit* of God, who will not let the Sinner go on quietly in his Sins; but is continually using the

the most rational and proper Means to bring him to Repentance. SERM.  
XVII.

3. *THE Holy Spirit* enables us to offer up our Prayers to God with Fervency and Devotion; and this he performs by inciting in us such Graces and Affections, as render our Prayers acceptable unto God; he fixes the Soul upon God, who is the Object of Prayer; he defends it from vain and wandering Thoughts; he enables a Man to confess his Sins with Shame and Confusion of Face; to implore God's Mercy with Hope and Confidence; to beg temporal good Things with Resignation to God's Will; to intercede for others with fervent Love and Charity; and, to return God Thanks for his Blessings with Gratitude and Admiration of God's Goodness. This is that *Praying by the Spirit* (which some Persons mistake so grossly) when we pray with Judgment and Understanding, when we pray with Submission of our Wills to God's Divine Will, when our Affections and Desires are passionately touched with the Thing we pray for; this is such a Temper of Mind as is produced by the Inspiration of the *Holy Spirit*, which will render our Prayers an acceptable Sacrifice in the Sight of God. Whereas to pray with Fluency of Words, without

SERM. without any serious Attention to the Matter of our Prayers, or with Clamour and Noise, and affected Gestures, is only *bodily Exercise*, which, the *Apostle* tells us, *will profit nothing*; or to be guilty of the other Extream, to pray with Wildness and Indifferency, as if we had no Awe of the Majesty of that God to whom we pray, nor Concern for the obtaining of those Things we pray for; this is not the Way to *take Heaven by Force*, or to become successful Petitioners at the Throne of Grace.

4. and Lastly, THE *Holy Spirit* gives us comfortable Hopes and Representations of Happiness hereafter; he possesses the Mind of every good Man, who has sincerely endeavoured to obey his Commands, with an holy Trust and Confidence in him, and Dependence on him for the Performance of all his Promises. When he takes a View of the past Actions of his Life, and finds, that, though his Obedience has been imperfect, yet he has served God with Uprightness and Integrity, and a sincere Desire to please him; he then concludes with St. Paul, *I have fought a good Fight, I have finished my Course, I have kept the Faith; henceforth there is laid up for me a Crown of Righteousness, which the Lord*

2 Tim. iv.  
6, 7, 8.



*Lord, the righteous Judge shall give me.* SERM.

Oh ! how happy and blessed is that Man's XVII.

Condition, who is free from the Pangs of a guilty Conscience and the Dread of an After-reckoning ; who can look backward upon his past Life, and forward upon his approaching Dissolution, with Joy and Satisfaction of Mind ? These are the Fruits of a Life led according to the Rules of Virtue and Religion, and that Earnest, Pledge, or Antepast of those heavenly Joys, which this *Comforter* brings along with him.

WHAT remains therefore, but that we fit and prepare ourselves for his Reception ; that we furnish our Souls with such good Dispositions, and deck and adorn our Minds with such Qualifications as may incline the *Holy Spirit*, to take up his Abode with us, and to conduct us from Grace to Glory ? The *Holy Spirit* will not be wanting, on his Part, to make us either holy or happy ; he will breathe into our Hearts holy Affections and Desires, but, if we do not nourish and cherish them, if we do not blow up these Sparks of Devotion, and second them with our pious Endeavours, they will not stay or abide with us ; if we entertain any unmortified Lust in our Hearts, if we grieve this *Holy Spirit*, by the

SERM. the Commission of any known Sin, we  
XVII. shall drive him away from us. For, tho'

Sanctification is the proper Work of the *Holy Ghost*, yet it is requisite, that we comply with his Motions to make them effectual; we have a Liberty left, either of accepting or refusing the Assistance of his Grace, and it is in our own Power to make ourselves either eternally happy or miserable. How great Reason then have we to praise and magnify the Name of God; with what Joy and Gladness of Heart, with what Zeal and Fervency of Devotion ought we to celebrate those glorious Festivals which the Church, even from the *Apostolical* Times has set a-part in Commemoration of this wonderful Blessing of sending the *Holy Spirit* to comfort us, and assist us in the Performance of those Things, which we have not Strength and Ability to effect? It must needs have been very beneficial to us, if our Blessed Saviour had thought it expedient to have taken up his Abode here upon Earth, and to have governed his Kingdom in Person; we should have reaped great Advantage by his watchful Inspection, his wholesome Advice, his sweet Conversation, and his exact and perfect Example. Yet our Saviour himself has intimated to us, that  
the

*The Mission of the Holy Ghost.*

367

the Gift of the *Holy Spirit* is attended SERM.  
with stronger Motives to Holiness, than XVII.  
his personal Residence amongst us could  
afford : *It is expedient for you that I go* Joh. xvi.  
*away.* The internal Operation of the  
*Holy Ghost* will more effectually convince  
the Judgment, subdue the Will, and af-  
fect the Heart, than any exterior Word  
or Example can. Let us then humbly  
and meekly submit ourselves to this Ble-  
sed *Spirit* ; let us wait upon him with  
Faith and Reverence ; let us frequent his  
Ordinances, receive his Inspirations, cherish  
his Motions ; and let us praise and magni-  
fy the Name of our good God, for *send-*  
*ing* him to rule and govern us. *Amen and*  
*Amen.*

SERMON



## S E R M O N XVIII.

The Duty of walking in the Spirit;

GALAT. V. 25.

*If we live in the Spirit, let us also walk  
in the Spirit.*SERM.  
XVIII.

**T**HERE is nothing which is more talked of, by Professors of all Denominations, nor is there any Thing which is more universally pretended to, than the Gifts and Graces of God's *Holy Spirit*; and yet generally there is no Article of our Faith more perverted and less understood; and that which is most deplorable is, that many of those Divines, who have treated most largely and on set Purpose on this Argument, seem to have done nothing, but to have rendered those Expressions, which, in themselves, were plain and natural, perplexed

plexed and unintelligible. Enthusiasts, in SERM.  
the Church of *Rome*, and, amongst some XVIII.  
Protestants, make it their chief Business  
to teach Men how to lead a spiritual Life;  
but when they come to explain this to  
their Hearers, by affecting an uncouth and  
unusual Way of expressing themselves, they  
either amuse us with common and known  
Truths, or gild over dangerous and anti-  
quated Errors with Scripture Phrase.

THE Words, which I have read to you,  
are a remarkable Instance of this; which,  
though they contain Truths, which, if  
duly understood, may be of great Use  
to us, yet have they been perverted to  
countenance the most extravagant Con-  
ceits of a heated Fancy. *The Temple of  
the Lord, the Temple of the Lord*, was  
the general Cry of the Zealots amongst  
the Jews; and *Walking by the Spirit*, and  
*Living by the Spirit*, is the distinguishing  
Phrase of the Quakers and Enthusiasts  
amongst us; and therefore, I hope, it will  
not be judged unseasonable, that I spend the  
Time allotted me, in giving you the full  
Import and true Meaning of these Words:  
*If we live in the Spirit, let us walk in the  
Spirit.* In the Performance of which I  
shall shew,

SERM.

XVIII. I. WHAT is meant by Spirit.

II. WHAT, by *Living in the Spirit*.III. WHAT, by *Walking in the Spirit*.IV. WHERE the Force of the *Apostle's* Argument lies, that, if we *Live in the Spirit*, we ought to *Walk in the Spirit*.

V. and Lastly, I SHALL conclude with some Inferences from the Whole.

I. WHAT is meant by *the Spirit*. Amongst the many Acceptations of this Word which are to be met with in the Holy Scripture, I shall only take Notice of the four following; because all the other may be reduced to these, and these are sufficient to prepare our Way for the better Understanding what I have to say upon this Subject. And,

John iv.  
24.

I. THE Word *Spirit* is sometimes put for the *Mind of a Man*, and in this Sense it is taken by St. *John*, where to *worship God in Spirit*, is to worship him in our Souls, in Opposition to that bodily Worship in which some Men place the Whole of their Religion, who appear before God with their Bodies, but their Minds are in some other Place, and taken up with some other Employment; and thus in



in the Epistle to the Colossians, though I am SERM.  
absent from you in the Flesh, yet I am XVIII.  
with you in the Spirit, i. e. you are fre-  
quently in my Thoughts, and I wish Col. ii. 5.  
myself with you.

2. THE Spirit sometimes signifies the  
Disposition of a Man's Mind, the Frame  
and Temper of our Souls; thus we are  
to understand that Spirit of Faith men-  
tioned by St. Paul, which enabled the 2 Cor. iv.  
Primitive Christians to bear Affliction for  
God's Sake, and to depend on him for  
their Deliverance and Reward: God hath 2 Tim. i.  
not given us the Spirit of Fear, but of  
Power and of Love; contrary to that  
timorous cowardly Temper, which makes  
Men afraid of enduring Persecution for  
Christ's Sake, and the Keeping of a good  
Conscience. Hereby, saith St. John, We  
know that we dwell in him, and he in us,  
because he hath given us of his Spirit; and, 1 John iv.  
what that Spirit is, we may see plainly 13.  
by the former Words: If we love one an-  
other, God dwelleth in us. Verse 12. It is that Spirit  
of Charity, Love, and Kindness, where-  
by we resemble God, who is the Fountain  
of all Good, from whom comes every good  
and perfect Gift.

3. BY the Spirit in the inspired Writ-  
ings we are frequently to understand, the

SERMON third Person in the Holy Trinity, whom  
 XVIII. emphatically we call the *Holy Spirit*, or  
 the *Holy Ghost*. This is so well known,  
 and the Texts in which the *Spirit* is taken  
 in this Sense are so numerous, that I need  
 not give you many Instances of it, and  
 1 Cor. xii. therefore one shall suffice: *There are Di-*  
 4. *versities of Gifts, but the same Spirit;*  
 where by *Spirit*, it is plain, we are to un-  
 Verse 6. derstand the *Holy Ghost*, for he saith, *it is*  
*the same God that worketh all in all;* which,  
 Verse 11. compared with what follows, *but all those*  
*worketh that one and the self-same Spirit,*  
*dividing unto every Man severally as he will,*  
 makes it plain, that, by the *Spirit* in this  
 Place, St. Paul understands God the *Holy*  
*Ghost*.

4. and Lastly, THE *Spirit* is frequently  
 used to signify the Operations of the Ho-  
 ly *Spirit*; thus pouring out of the *Spirit*,  
 Acts ii. 17. mentioned in the *Acts*, plainly signifies his  
 bestowing supernatural Gifts in a great  
 Measure upon the *Apostles* and *Disciples*  
 of our Saviour *Christ*. It is a Phrase of  
 Luke xi. the same Import with giving the *Spirit*,  
 13. which is explained by St. Matthew by  
 Matt. vii. giving good Things, i. e. such good Things  
 11. as the *Spirit* of God is the Author of;  
 and, because the *Holy Spirit* is the Author  
 and Giver of these several Gifts, therefore,  
 by

by an usual Figure, those Persons, who SERM. have received these Gifts and Graces, are XVIII. said to receive the *Holy Spirit*; as appears from that plain Text, *There are Diversities of Gifts, but the same Spirit*; for to 1 Cor. xii. 4, 8. one is given, by the Spirit, the Word of Wisdom; to another the Word of Knowledge, by the same Spirit. But, besides these, there are several other Significations of the Word *Spirit* in the Holy Scripture, though these are the chief, and, I think, that, by what has been already said, it is evident, that in the Text the *Spirit* is taken in the last Sense, for the Gifts, the Graces, or Operations of the *Holy Spirit*; which will more evidently appear, by considering,

II. WHAT is meant by *Living in the Spirit*: If we *Live in the Spirit*, let us also *Walk in the Spirit*. Which Phrase of *Living in the Spirit*, is by some Commentators paraphrased thus: *Si vitam æternam per Spiritum consecuti sumus, i. e.* If the *Holy Spirit* works in our Hearts the Hopes and Expectations of eternal Life. Others chuse rather to express it thus: *Si internam habemus vitam & animam gratiæ, i. e.* If our Actions flow from an internal Principle of God's Grace in our Souls, Both these Senses are comprehended in the Words, but that which is most ex-



SERM. pressive, and which I esteem the most  
 XVIII. genuine Sense of the Words, is rendered

thus: *Si vitam novam per Spiritum consecuti sumus; i. e.* If the Holy Spirit has wrought so effectually in us, as that we are born again to Newness of Life; if we have undergone the great Work of  
 Ephes. iv. 22, 23. Regeneration, and have put off, concerning our former Conversation, the Old Man, which is corrupt according to the deceitful Lusts; and be renewed in the Spirit of our Minds; and that we put on the New Man, which after God is created in Righteousness and true Holiness. For that Change which is wrought upon a Man's Mind, when he is converted from the Ways of Sin and Wickedness, to the Ways of Virtue and Religion, is, in the Holy Scripture, frequently compared to a new Birth; and those, who are thus changed, are said to be born again, and to be new Men, because they lead a quite different Life from that they did formerly; they act by quite different Principles, and aim at a different End; the whole Course of their Lives is altered, their moral Habits are changed, and there is as much Difference between their Actings in these two States, a State of Sin and a State of Grace, as there is between two several

several Persons. If therefore there is a SERM.  
Principle of Grace in our Souls; if by XVIII.  
the Assistance of Gods *Holy Spirit* there  
is such a Change wrought upon our  
Minds, that we, who were *dead in Tres-*  
*passes and Sins*, are raised up to Newness  
of Life; then let us also walk in the *Spi-*  
*rit*; which brings me,

III. To enquire what is denoted by  
this Expression. Now the Word which  
is here rendered, *Walk*, is in the Ori-  
ginal *περιπατεῖν*, which comprehends these  
three Things; It denotes, *First*, A pro-  
gressive Motion; *Secondly*, A Continu-  
ance and Perseverance in this Motion;  
and *Thirdly*, A Keeping within some set  
and certain Bounds and Limits; which,  
being applied to our Actions, will give  
us the full Import and Meaning of this  
Phrase, *Let us Walk in the Spirit*. To  
*Walk in the Spirit*, then, is to keep that  
Course in our Lives which the *Holy Spi-*  
*rit* directs, to act according to his Will  
revealed in the Holy Scripture, and to  
keep within those Bounds which he has  
set us; to tread in the Paths of Holi-  
ness and Virtue, and to persevere in Liv-  
ing thus to the End of our Lives; this  
is to *Walk in the Spirit*. And thus hav-  
ing considered the Meaning of both these

SERM. Expressions of *Living in the Spirit*, and  
XVIII. *Walking in the Spirit*, it will appear from

hence, that the plain Meaning of these Words, *If we live in the Spirit, let us also walk in the Spirit*, is this: If we have truly repented of our Sins, and undergone the New Birth, and have a Principle of Grace in our Souls, let us make this evident both to ourselves and others, by leading spiritual Lives, *i. e.* by governing all our Actions by those Rules which are laid down by the inspired Penmen of the Holy Writ; by seconding all these good Motions which the *Holy Spirit* suggests to our Minds, and improving daily in Virtue and Godliness of Living; for that, which is the governing Principle of our Souls, will influence all our Actions. And, that our Obligation, thus to live, doth proceed from our having entered on a spiritual Life, and made a Profession of Religion, will appear from considering,

IV. WHERE the Force of the *Apostle's* Argument lies, that, *If we live in the Spirit, we ought also to Walk in the Spirit*. And this we shall plainly discover by making the following Reflexions:

I. THAT Holiness is an essential Property of God. God is a pure and holy Being, and takes Delight in those who bear his Image and Similitude; and therefore



fore this is the Reason why the Gifts SERM.  
and Graces of his *Spirit* are bestowed XVIII.  
upon us, that we may *cleanse ourselves*  
*from all Filthiness both of Flesh and Spi-*  
*rit*, and make our Hearts a fit Habita-  
tion for his *Holy Spirit* to dwell in. Ho-  
liness in God is the Harmony and ex-  
act Rectitude of his Nature, and, since  
God is a Being of infinite Perfection, his  
Holiness must needs be so; and therefore,  
the more holy we are, the more we re-  
semble God, in which our Perfection and  
Happiness doth consist; and, the more  
conformable our Minds are to the Divine  
Being, the more we shall admire and  
love him; and, the greater our Admira-  
tion and Love is, the more we shall  
seek to please him, and conform our Ac-  
tions to his Divine Will; so, that *if we*  
*live in the Spirit*, we must needs *Walk*  
*in the Spirit*.

2. It is the particular Office of the  
*Holy Spirit*, to sanctify us and make us  
holy. The third Person in the Blessed  
Trinity has the Title of *Holy*, because  
his proper Office is to sanctify all the  
Elect of God; so that, the more we par-  
take of the *Holy Spirit*, the more exact  
and regular will our Lives be; for the  
true Notion of a spiritual Life is not a  
Life spent wholly in the devotional Part  
of

SERM. of Religion; but a Life spent according  
 XVIII. to the Rules of sanctified Reason, and the  
 Dictates of God's *Holy Spirit* contained in  
 his Word. The *Spirit* of God is a vigorous and active Principle, and, where he has taken up his Residence in the Soul of a Man, he will derive a powerful Influence upon all his Thoughts, Words, and Actions. The *Holy Spirit* will suggest good Thoughts into his Mind, inspire him with holy and generous Resolutions, and incite and allure him to good and virtuous Actions. And, when this spiritual Principle reigns in the Soul of a Man, it will make him to be fruitful and abound in every good Work. In all natural Bodies where there is Life, there is Action and Motion, a Cessation from these is their Death and Dissolution: And thus in spiritual Matters, Living in the *Spirit* supposes a Perseverance in all virtuous and godly Living; and, the more spiritual we are, the more will these Gifts and Graces of God's *Holy Spirit* appear in our Lives and Conversations, For,

3. It is natural for our Actions to follow the prevailing Interest of our Minds, the Will closes with and pursues the last Dictate of the Understanding. If therefore our Thoughts are taken up with the Delights of this World, and our Minds allured

allured with sensual Pleasure, our whole Employment will be to gratify our irregular Appetites, and to obtain those Things which are pleasing and delightful to us; but if we are heartily convinced of the Danger which these perishing and short-lived Enjoyments expose us to; if we are sensible of our Folly in pursuing after them; and, upon mature Choice and Deliberation wisely prefer an holy and spiritual Life before a carnal and sensual one; then our own Choice and Inclination will lead us, to live such Lives, whereby we may approve ourselves to God and our own Consciences, to live up to the Dictates of Reason and the Dignity and Excellency of our spiritual Part, which is truly and properly to *Walk in the Spirit*.

SERM.  
XVIII.

4. God has promised us his Divine Assistance, whereby we shall receive sufficient Power and Ability to perform our Duty, and to walk in the Way of his Commandments; so that it must be through our own Fault and Negligence, if, after we have entered upon a regenerate State, we draw back, and return to a sensual and wicked Life; and from hence there arises a most strict and powerful Obligation, to live an holy and spiritual Life, because the neglecting of it would be a despising the  
Grace



SERM. Grace of God, we should grieve God's  
 XVIII. *Holy Spirit*, by flighting his Motions and  
 ~~~~~ resisting his Inspirations, and hereby we  
 should provoke him to leave and forsake
 us, to give us up to our worst Enemies, to
 the Conduct of our own vicious Inclinations,
 and to suffer us to be ruled and governed by
 them, and without any Check or Remorse
 to go on in our sinful Courses with Plea-
 sure and Delight.

5. *and Lastly*, If we have entered upon
 a regenerate State, and have tasted how
 good and gracious God is, and pretend to
 live by the *Spirit*, and yet do not walk by
 the *Spirit*, our Condemnation will be much
 greater and our Punishment more intoler-
 able than other Men's. For much better
 had it been that we had never known the
 Way of Righteousness than, after we have
 known it, to turn from the holy Com-
 mandment delivered unto us. For it must
 needs be a very great Aggravation of our
 Sin, if, after we have performed the most
 difficult Part of our Task, and have had
 Experience of the Grace of God assisting
 us to vanquish and overcome our spiritual
 Enemies, and have run well for some
 Time; we should fall off from our first
 Love, and suffer ourselves to be overcome
 and led Captive by a vanquished Enemy:

This

This would be, in Effect, to declare to the **SERM.**
whole World, that having had Experience **XVIII.**
both of a virtuous and vicious Life, and
with equal Care made Trial of them
both, we deliberately chuse to go on in
our wicked Courses, and prefer them be-
fore the Leading of a good and virtuous
Life. This would be the foulest Scandal
which can be thrown upon Christianity,
and, in Effect, to disown our Profession,
and to renounce our Baptism. If there-
fore we live *in the Spirit*, if we have un-
dergone the Pangs of the New Birth, and
have entered upon a new and spiritual
Life, and have tasted how good and gra-
cious God is, let us never return again un-
to Folly, nor suffer ourselves to be de-
luded by those Pleasures of Sin which are
but for a Season; but let us implore the
Assistance of God's *Holy Spirit*, and im-
prove that Grace which he has given us to
the best Ends and Purposes; let us second
his Motions, comply with his Counsels,
afford an open Ear and an attentive Mind to
all his Suggestions and Inspirations, and in all
Things follow his Guidance and good Con-
duct, which alone will enable us to walk
in the Paths of Virtue, and to persevere to
the End, in Holiness and godly Living.

SERM.

XVIII.

V. I now come, *Lastly*, To make some Inferences from what has been said.

I. WOULD you know what the Condition of your Soul is, as to another Life, whether you are in the Way to Heaven, or in the Way to Hell, whether eternal Happiness, or eternal Misery, will be your Lot and Portion in another Life? Consider with yourselves whether you *walk in the Spirit*, or not; for it is only that Person who *doth Righteousness is righteous*. It is not a fluent Uttering ourselves with Zeal and Warmth in our Devotions, which some miscall *Praying by the Spirit*; nor a confident Assurance of our Predestination and Salvation, which others miscall Faith, nor a firm Persuasion of the Orthodoxy of our Faith; which is a sure Foundation to ground our Hopes of eternal Salvation upon; if we depend upon these, we shall but deceive ourselves: But the only sure Sign of our Regeneration, and by Consequence, of our eternal Happiness, is our Sanctification, which consists in a steady, uniform, and constant Practice of the Precepts of the Gospel, in all the Instances of an holy Life. Most of the other Marks and Signs of our Regeneration, which some Writers have increased to so great a Number, that they amount to near forty, are very

1 Joh. iii.
7.

very uncertain, and subject to be mistaken, **SERM.**
and have been the Cause and Original of **XVIII.**
many Doubts and Scruples in the Minds of
such Men, who have either weak Heads,
or timorous Dispositions; but this is a
certain Rule, which will never fail us;
by this Means we may certainly know
the State and Condition of our own Souls;
if we do but ask ourselves this one plain
Question, and appeal to our own Con-
sciences, whether we live like Christians
or not; and hereby we shall easily dis-
cover, whether we have the Life and Soul
of genuine Piety and true Religion in us.
The Tree will discover itself by its Fruits,
and where there is a Principle of Grace
and Holiness in the Soul of a Man, it will
be operative, and produce good Actions.
The *Apostle*, in the Verses before the
Text, supposes, that there is an Opposi-
tion between a carnal and a spiritual Mind,
and that the Way, to distinguish one
from the other, is, to consider their
Fruits and Effects. For he tells us,
That, *the Works of the Flesh are manifest*, **Gal. v.**
which are these, Adultery, Fornication, **19. &c.**
Uncleanness, Lasciviousness, Idolatry, Witch-
craft, Hatred, Variance, Emulations,
Wrath, Strife, Seditions, Heresies, En-
vyings,

SERM. *vyings, Murders, Drunkenness, Revellings,*
 XVIII *and such like : But the Fruit of the Spi-*

rit is Love, Joy, Peace, Long-suffering,
 Ver. 22. *Gentleness, Goodness, Faith, Meekness,*
 23. *Temperance, against such there is no Law,*
i. e. they lie under the Condemnation of no

Law, because they do not transgress a-
 Ver. 25. *gainst it. And then he concludes, If we*
live in the Spirit, let us also walk in the
Spirit ; plainly intimating to us, that our
Walking in the Spirit is a plain and evi-
dent Sign, that we have a Principle of spi-
ritual Life in our Souls, and live under the
immediate Conduct and Influence of God's
Holy Spirit.

2. FROM this Phrase of *Walking in the*
Spirit, we may infer, that it is the Duty
 of every good Christian to *grow in Grace*,
 and to improve in virtuous and holy
 Living, to proceed from one Degree of
 Grace to another, till at last we arrive
 at the Fulness of Stature in the Lord
Jesus Christ ; for those, who are regene-
 rate and born again, will, like *new born*
 1 Pet. ii. 2. *Babes, desire the sincere Milk of the Word,*
that they may grow thereby. And, if we
 do not go forward in the Ways of Vir-
 tue, we may be assured we are turning
 aside to the crooked Paths of Error and
 Vice.

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Vice; if our good Habits do not grow every Day more strong and more natural to us, and we are not deeper rooted and grounded in the Fear and Love of God, it is an infallible Sign that our spiritual Life languishes and decays in us, and that we are in a declining and dangerous Condition.

Lastly, From this Expression of *Living in the Spirit*, we may infer, that it is our Duty, and ought to be our great Care, to entertain the Motions and to cherish the Inspirations and blessed Influences of God's *Holy Spirit*; for since the Gifts and Graces of God's *Holy Spirit* are the Springs and Principles of all spiritual Life in our Souls, and since these Graces are not wrought in us after an irresistible Manner, but in Conjunction with our own Diligence and vigorous Endeavours; it will from hence evidently appear, that our great Care ought to be, first to fit and prepare ourselves, and to purge our Souls from every unclean Thing, that they may be a suitable Habitation for God's *Holy Spirit* to dwell in; and then in the next Place, to comply with his Operations, to yield to his Motions, and obey his Commands, and thus by making a good Use of that Grace which

SERM. God has given us, we shall entitle our-
 XVIII. selves to more, and engage God, the Au-
 ~~~~~ thor of every good and perfect Gift, to  
 fill all our Capacities of receiving; and  
 then we shall grow in Grace, and in-  
 crease in Favour with God and Man,  
 till our patient Continuing in Well-doing  
 has had its perfect Work in our Souls,  
 which God of his Mercy grant for *Jesus*  
*Christ his Sake.*

## SERMON

# S E R M O N XIX.

## The Fruits of the Spirit.

GAL. V. 22, 23.

But the Fruit of the Spirit is Love,  
Joy, Peace, Long-suffering, Gentle-  
ness, Goodness, Faith,  
Meekness, Temperance : against such  
there is no Law.

**A**S Moses said to the Children of Is-  
rael, I have set before you Life  
and Death, Blessing and Cursing;  
therefore chuse Life, that both thou  
and thy Seed may live ; so the Apostle St. Paul,  
in this Chapter, sets forth unto us the con-  
trary Fruits of the *Flesh* and of the *Spirit* ;  
shews us the Opposition which is between  
them

Deut.  
xxx. 19.

SERM. them, to the End that we should chuse  
XIX. the one, and refuse the other. *The Works*

*of the Flesh*, he tells us, *are manifest, i. e.*  
Ver. 19.

such as every one may know, such as are  
*Adultery, Fornication, Witchcraft, Variance,*  
*Wrath, Strife, &c.* but the *Fruits of the*  
*Spirit* are more difficult to be discerned;  
it will require some Care and Diligence to  
discern them from counterfeit Graces, and  
such as appear to be like them, though  
they are not truly such. *But the Fruit of*  
*the Spirit is Love, Joy, Peace, Long-*  
*suffering, Gentleness, Goodness, Faith, Meek-*  
*ness, Temperance.* These are the chief  
and principal, but not all *the Fruits of the*  
*Spirit*; they are sufficient to discover to  
any Man, whether the *Spirit* of God dwells  
in him; and, since all the Graces of the  
*Holy Spirit* are so firmly connected  
together, by one common Bond, he, who  
practises one, will practise all the rest:

Which that we may be encouraged to per-  
Ver. 18. form, the *Apostle* adds, *Against such there*  
*is no Law*, and, if you be led by the *Spirit*,  
*ye are not under the Law*; agreeable with

Rom. viii. that of the same *Apostle*, *If ye live after*  
13. *the Flesh ye shall die: but if ye through*  
*the Spirit do mortify the Deeds of the Body,*  
*ye shall live.* Which is as much as to say,  
that



that if ye bring forth these *Fruits of the Spirit*, if ye practise these Graces, ye shall not lie under the Condemnation of any Law, ye shall not be liable to that Punishment which those Persons expose themselves to, who give themselves up to the undue Gratification of their sensual Appetites and Desires. SERM. XIX.

BUT since there is some Difficulty in discerning those *Fruits of the Spirit*, which are true and genuine, from those which are false and counterfeit, I shall therefore proceed in this Method:

I. I SHALL give you a brief Description of those Graces which are here called the *Fruits of the Spirit*.

II. I SHALL shew, why they are called the *Fruits of the Spirit*.

III. FROM both these I shall raise some plain and practical Inferences.

I. I BEGIN, first, with giving a brief Description of those Graces which, in the Text, are called, *The Fruits of the Spirit*. And,

THE first which is mentioned is *Love*, in the Original *Agape*, *Charity*, which in the general imports Glory, Honour, and

SERMON. Piety towards God and Good-will towards  
 XIX. Men; and in this large Sense it is taken in  
 most Places of the Holy Scripture; But here  
 it seems to be restrained within a narrower  
 Compass to Benevolence and Loving-  
 kindness towards our Fellow-Creatures;  
 as being opposed to those *Fruits of the  
 Flesh*, mentioned in the Verse before the  
 Text, *Envyings and Murders*, Sins chiefly  
 and principally committed against the se-  
 cond Table. And, in Truth, this Love  
 towards our Neighbour very well deserves  
 to be set in the first Place, as being not  
 only the chief and principal, but also  
 the Source and Original of all those other  
 Graces which are here named, as the ge-  
 nuine *Fruits of the Holy Spirit*. Our Joy,  
*Peace, Long-suffering, Gentleness, Good-  
 ness, Faith, Meekness, Temperance*, all pro-  
 ceed from that Spirit of Love, which the  
 Christian Religion infuses into the Minds  
 and Souls of its Disciples and Professors.  
 He that duly and seriously considers that  
 we have all one Lord and Master, that we  
 are embarked in one common Interest, that  
 we have *one Faith, one Baptism*, and *hope*,  
 at last, to arrive at the same Place, the  
 Rest and Haven of our Souls; must needs  
 think it highly reasonable that we should  
 be

be of one Heart and one Mind. We all SERM.  
pretend to be travelling towards our Father's XIX.  
House, why then should we fall out by the  
Way; and break that Unity of the Spirit in  
the Bond of Peace, which alone can  
qualify us to be fit Inhabitants of the  
heavenly Jerusalem?

AND, in Truth, it is the Nature of pure  
and undefiled Religion, to unite the Minds  
of its Disciples, to calm the Disorder of  
their Passions, to give Bounds to their in-  
ordinate Appetites, and to cement their  
Affections one towards another. For as  
we are told in another Place, *God is Love*, John iv,  
and therefore, the better we serve 8.  
God, the more like we shall be to him;  
and, the more like we are to him, the  
more we shall partake of this Divine Qua-  
lity of loving our Neighbour, doing Good  
to all Men, and rendering ourselves as  
beneficial as we can possibly be to all with  
whom we converse, not only parting with  
some of our Goods to relieve the Poor,  
which is that stingy Notion which some have  
of Charity; but imploying our Time, our  
Parts, and all those other Talents which  
God has entrusted us with, to advance  
his Glory, and to promote the Welfare of  
our



SERM. our Neighbour: Not only to afford him  
 XIX. some small pecuniary Relief, but to feed  
 him when hungry, when naked to cloath  
 him, when ignorant to inform him, to  
 to reprove him when doing Evil, and en-  
 courage him when doing well; to advise  
 him when in Doubt, and, in short, to do  
 him all those good Offices, which we  
 should desire to have performed towards us  
 by any other Person, if we were in his  
 Condition, and he in ours. And there-  
 fore, Religion may well be thought to de-  
 rive its Name *à Religando*, from Binding,  
 because in its own Nature it is suited and  
 appropriated to promote Peace, and Love,  
 and Unanimity amongst Men. And it is an  
 Observation well worth our Meditation,  
 that the great and cardinal Virtues of the  
 Christian Religion are social, such as tend  
 to promote the Well-being of Societies, to  
 uphold Government, and to make King-  
 doms and Bodies of People prosper and  
 flourish, by being mutually helpful and  
 assistant one to the other.

It is true, indeed, wicked and ungodly  
 Men have made Religion serve to quite  
 different Purposes, to be the Occasion of  
 the greatest Bustle and Disturbances, the  
 most bloody Wars and deplorable Devasta-  
 tions,

tions, which have happened in the World; SERM. 2  
and Men have put on the Mask of Re- XIX  
ligion, when they have been going about  
the most villainous Attempts: But this  
is not the Fault of Religion, but of  
the Men who only pretend to it; the best  
Things may be made Use of, to the worst  
Purposes; and the most glorious Angel,  
when fallen from his first Station, becomes  
the most malicious Devil. For, were these  
Men such as they pretend to be, their Re-  
ligion would produce better Fruits; for the  
Fruits of the Spirit are first *Love*, second-  
ly *Joy*, and then *Peace*, *Long-suffering*,  
*Gentleness*. It would be an easy Matter to  
prove, by undeniable Reasons, that *Love*  
is the proper and genuine Fruit of the  
*Holy Spirit*, but this would require a par-  
ticular Discourse; I shall therefore proceed  
to shew, what is meant by that *Joy*,  
which in the next Place is laid down as a  
*Fruit of the Spirit*. *The Fruit of the Spi-*  
*rit*, is, first, *Love*, and,

2. *Joy*. This spiritual Joy is of the Rom. xiv.  
same Nature with that called *Joy in the* 17.  
*Holy Ghost*, i. e. Such a Joy, as hath the  
*Holy Spirit* for its Author; such a Joy as  
can only lodge in a holy and sanctified  
Soul; when a Man is wonderfully delight-  
ed

SERM. ted and pleased, to see Men love and

XIX. serve God, and hereby to advance his

Glory in the World; which is the true

Effect of that Divine Charity, which, as

we are told, *Rejoiceth not in Iniquity, but*

*rejoiceth in the Truth*; or, when the Con-

sideration of the wonderful Love of God

towards us incites us to praise and magni-

fy his Name, fills our Souls with Joy, and

makes our Hearts more glad than they

are whose Corn and Wine increase: Or,

when out of a noble and heavenly Dispo-

sition we partake of those good Things

our Neighbour enjoys, and, as being

Members of the same Body, we sympa-

thize with others in the Good which they

receive, and rejoice with them that rejoice:

When, with the blessed Angels in Heaven,

we rejoice at the Conversion of a Sinner,

take Delight in seeing him turn from the

Evil of his Ways, or, when any temporal

Benefit or good Thing happens unto

him.

THIS is that spiritual Joy which is op-

posed to a narrow and selfish Temper,

when Men make themselves the Center

of all their Actions, seek after nothing

but their own Advantage, and endeavour

to do Good to no Body but themselves:

When

1 Cor.  
xiii. 6.



When neither the good nor the bad Fortune of others touches them, neither do they think themselves at all concerned at it. It is only their own Advantage which they seek, and therefore with the brutish *Epicurean*, when they are gone, they care not what becomes of all the World besides; or, what is much worse, when Men are of an envious and malicious Temper, and so far from rejoicing at the Good of their Neighbour, that it is their greatest Trouble and Affliction to see any one enjoy more of the good Things of the World, and (as they think) be more happy than themselves: These Men are best pleased, when any Misfortune befalls their Neighbour; like the Spider and the Toad they feed upon Poison, and their chief Pleasure and Joy is, in the Miseries of other Men; this is a Temper of Mind directly contrary to that Joy, which is the *Fruit of the Spirit*, and very much resembles those Apostate Spirits, who, having lost their original Purity and Happiness, make it their Business to reduce Mankind into the same deplorable State and miserable Condition. But to proceed,

3. THE third *Fruit of the Spirit*, mentioned in the Text, is *Peace*, *Esse*, Peaceable.

SERMON. able-mindedness; or, the Study of pre-  
 XIX. serving Peace amongst Men; not that  
 Peace which is a Felicity, but that Peace  
 which is a Virtue, called, *Διόξιν* Pursuing  
 of Peace, or Following after Peace,  
 a Christian and Charitable Desire to main-  
 tain our Peace with the whole World,  
 and an earnest Endeavour to promote Peace  
 amongst Mankind, to make up Differences  
 and Quarrels, and to reconcile such as  
 are by any unhappy Accident fallen at  
 Variance; when Men are of a pacific and  
 healing Temper, ready to forgive In-  
 juries themselves, and to compose the ex-  
 orbitant Passions and boiling Blood of o-  
 ther Men, this is one of the blessed Fruits and  
 Effects of the *Holy Spirit*, and a heavenly  
 Disposition of Mind, and such Peace-  
 makers, as these, shall certainly be blessed  
 both in this World and in the World to  
 come.

VERY contrary is that devilish and  
 wicked Disposition of Mind, which takes  
 Delight to live in Contention and Strife,  
 and, like the Salamander, loves to live in  
 the Fire; when Men make it their Busi-  
 ness to set others together by the Ears,  
 and with *Solomon's Whisperers* to separate  
 the nearest Friends; when Men either  
 break

break the Peace of the Government in SERM.  
which they live, by fomenting unquiet XIX.  
and turbulent Spirits, making Divisions

and Parties; or else disturb the Quiet and Contentment of private Families, by Whispering, Tale-bearing, uncharitable Censures, or uncertain Surmises and Reports, or by blowing up the Coals between such as are at Variance, and improving a slight Misunderstanding into an open Quarrel. They shew themselves to be of a Temper and Disposition quite opposite to that, which is *the Fruit of the Holy Spirit*; and that their Soul is *a Cage* more fit for those *unclean Birds*, the impure Spirits, than for the *Holy Ghost* to dwell in. The next after *Peace* follows,

3. *Long-suffering*, *Μακροθυμία*, or Forbearing one another, rather enduring some Injuries and overlooking some Affronts, than by taking Notice of them to be obliged to vindicate ourselves. A good Man is *not easily provoked*, he is willing to hope the best of others, and that they will see their own Errors; and, although he is not indued with a *Stoical* Apathy or Insensibility, but can as soon discern a Kindness from an Injury as other Men, and takes as exact Notice of the different



SERM. different Entertainment he meets with in  
 XIX. the World, yet his Christian Prudence  
 and Discretion teaches him oftentimes  
 to wink, and not to take Notice of  
 every trifling Injury and small Affront,  
 nay, to forgive and pass by the greatest,  
 whenever he sees any Hopes of Repentance,  
 or, that his Enemy begins to relent, and  
 is sorry for his unjust Dealing; and to stay  
 till Things are brought to the last Ex-  
 tremity, rather than take Revenge or to  
 break out into an open Quarrel. This is  
 that *Long-suffering* mentioned in the Text,  
 to which is joined,

4. *Gentleness, Goodness*, which seem to  
 be Words of much the same Import and  
 Signification, and to denote that Calmness  
 of Temper, Sweetness of Disposition,  
 Pleasantness of Conversation, Inoffensive-  
 ness of Behaviour, and, to comprehend  
 all in one Word, that Humanity, which  
 is a Grace of the *Holy Spirit*, influencing  
 Men's Lives and Conversations: For we  
 must not only endeavour to do as much  
 Good as we can, to be useful in our se-  
 veral Stations; we must not only forgive  
 Injuries, and be of a peaceable and quiet  
 Temper: But we must go further still,  
 we must lay aside all Sourness and Morose-  
 ness

ness of Temper; we must be hum- SERM.  
ble, meek, and condescending, of a kind XIX  
and courteous Behaviour, and inoffen-  
sive Urbanity, and hereby recommend the  
Gospel of our Saviour to others, and ren-  
der it lovely and amiable in the Sight of  
all Men. God himself is represented to  
us in the Holy Scripture by the Lamb and  
the Dove, not only the most innocent and  
harmless, but the most mild and gentle of  
all Creatures; and therefore we must avoid  
all Pride and Superciliousness, all Morose-  
ness and Ill-humour, if we will partake of  
this God-like Temper of Mind.

5. THE next Qualification that fol-  
lows, is *Faith* or *Fidelity*, Truth in keep-  
ing our Promises, and in making good  
our Compacts and Agreements; keeping  
our Word, though it is to our Hurt; per-  
forming our Bargain, though it is to our  
Disadvantage, and standing to our Agree-  
ments, though there is no Witness of  
them, but our own Consciences. This is  
the Foundation of all Justice; without  
doing this, we cannot be said to be just  
and honest Men, which falls very short of  
being good, and pious, and religious Per-  
sons.

6. THE

SERM.

XIX.

6. THE next *Fruit of the Spirit* is *Meekness*, which falls in, and is of the same Import and Signification with *Gentleness* and *Goodness*.

7. THE last is *Temperance*, by which is denoted, the Bridling and Government of our inordinate Passions: Or, the moderate and rational Use of Meats and Drinks, or Desire after the Pleasures and Enjoyments of Life. The common and vulgar Notion of Temperance is only the moderate Use of Meats and Drinks, this indeed is an eminent Instance of Temperance; but in Truth and Strictness of Speaking, he who knows how to govern his Passions, to love and hate, to fear and to be angry, according to Reason, to bound and limit his Desires after Pleasures, Riches, and Honours, such a Man is properly said to be temperate. Temperance therefore, in the true and proper Notion, is the Habit of governing all our Desires, Passions, and Appetites by the Laws of right Reason, and to submit all the Faculties of our Soul, all the Powers of our Body, to those Rules which Christ has laid down in his holy Gospel; and he is the temperate Man in the Text, who has got the absolute Rule and Dominion

over



over his Passions, who doth not indulge himself in any extravagant Course of Living, or give himself up to any Manner of Excess, either in Meat, Drink, or Apparel; in the Pursuit after Riches, Pleasures, or Preferment, nor lets loose the Reins to Anger, Lust, or Revenge; but serves God diligently and industriously in his Calling or Station, and rests contented with that Portion, which the wise Creator and Governor of the World is pleased to allot him. This is, in Truth, that Temperance which is the *Fruit of the Spirit*, and is the finishing Stroke laid down in the Text, whereby to give us the Character of a truly religious and virtuous Person. I come now to shew,

II. WHY, and in what Sense these Graces are called the *Fruits of the Holy Spirit*. Even amongst the Heathens, many were eminent for some of these Virtues; they were just, sober, and temperate; they made it their Business to do Good in the World; and practised these Virtues in so high a Degree, as to shame us Christians, and put those Men out of Countenance, who pretend to higher Degrees of Holiness and Perfection. Where, then, lies the Difference between those

D d

Actions,

SERM. Actions, which are the *Fruits of the Spirit*,  
 XIX. and those which are not, between the  
 ~~~~~ Virtues of a Heathen, and the Graces  
 of a Christian? To whom, I answer,
 much every Way, but chiefly in these
 following Particulars.

1. BECAUSE they proceed from a
 different Principle. The virtuous Actions
 of a Christian, which are the *Fruits of
 the Spirit*, proceed from the Operation of
 the *Holy Spirit* of God; every one, who
 is baptised into the Church of Christ,
 enters into a firm and solemn Covenant
 with God; he promises to be obedient to
 all the Laws of God, and God promises
 to enable him to perform this Vow and
 Engagement; he will give him the As-
 sistance of his *Holy Spirit*; the *Holy Spi-
 rit* of God shall take Possession of his
 Soul, and influence all his Actions. He
 will not, indeed, work in us after so ir-
 resistible a Manner, as to oblige us to do
 Good, even against our Wills; yet he
 will furnish us with such a competent
 Measure of spiritual Strength, as will en-
 able us, in Concurrence with our En-
 deavours, to perform whatsoever God
 requires of us: The *Holy Spirit* then is
 the Principle of all those Actions which
 flow

flow from Grace; whereas all the virtuous Actions of the Heathen flow only from the dark glimmering Remains of natural Light, and the obscure and imperfect Dictates of improved Reason; which may discover to us some Part of our Duty, but can never furnish us with Strength to go through with it. For,

2. THEY are acted by different Motives. The Heathen is moved chiefly by some temporal Advantage, he loves Virtue for that Dowry she brings along with her in this Life, those sensual Emoluments and Rewards which attend it: But the Christian chiefly eyes that Recompence of Reward which is to come, which will be bestowed upon us in a Life after this short Life is ended; his Hope is not here, but he expects and waits for an eternal and never fading Crown of Glory.

3. THEY aim at a different End. The Heathen designs principally his own Glory, but the Christian the Glory of God, and Obedience to his Commands. These are the chief Differences between a virtuous Heathen, and a religious Christian; or, which is the same Thing,
D d 2 between

SERM. between Virtue and Grace, by which

XIX. it plainly appears, that the same Actions, may be of different Natures, according to the different Circumstances of Things; that the *Splendida Peccata*, the bright Sins of a Heathen, may be saving Graces in a Christian; and what, in the one, may be only the Effect of a good natural Disposition, in the other, is the *Fruit of the Holy Spirit*. I come now,

III. In the last Place, to make some practical Remarks upon what has been said, and so I shall conclude.

HENCE we may learn, which are the great Lines of our Duty, wherein consist the principal Duties of the Christian Religion; and these, we are told, are Love, Peace, Justice, and Temperance. Religion is not here made to consist in any external Rites and Performances, in our being listed Members of the true Church, or of any Sect and Party of Christians, in the sole Profession of an Orthodox Faith, or in the Performance of the devotional Parts of Religion; such as Appearing in Public before God, Hearing and Reading his Word; but in practising the Precepts of Christianity, and in leading our Lives and Conversations ac-

cording

according to the Gospel, in the subduing **SERM.**
our Passions and Appetites, living justly, **XIX.**
soberly, and temperately, and maintaining

a sincere and universal Charity both to-
wards God, and towards Man.

*What doth the Lord require of thee (saith the
Prophet Micah) but to do justly, and to
love Mercy, and to walk humbly with thy* **Mich. vi.**
8.

God? That is, These are the chief and prin-
cipal Duties which God requires of us:
These we must be sure to do, though
we must not leave the other undone.

2. We may by these Signs certainly
discover, whether we have the Spirit of
God, or not. This is an Enquiry of the
nearest Importance and highest Conse-
quence, for, if we have not the Spirit of **2 Cor.**
God, we are *Reprobates, i. e.* Sons of Per- **xiii. 5.**
dition, in a lost and undone Condition,

as to all the Hopes of Happiness in
another World. Now, the best Way to
know, whether we have the Spirit of
God, is to consider, whether we bring
forth the *Fruits of the Spirit*; and,
what these are, we are told in the Text:
Not but that there are other *Fruits of
the Spirit*, which are not there mention-
ed, but that these are the chief and
principal, and sufficient to discover to
any

SERM. any Man what his Condition is, as to another
 XIX. World, and what his State will be
 hereafter.

LET us therefore consider seriously with ourselves, Do we love God and our Neighbour? Are we peaceable, just, and temperate? Do we govern our Appetites and Passions? Are we content with our Lot and Portion in this World, and can we submit ourselves chearfully and contentedly to the Hand of God in all Conditions, and under all Calamities, without Murmuring or Repining? If we find in ourselves these *Fruits of the Holy Spirit*, we may be assured, that the *Spirit of God* is in us, that we have received the Adoption of Children, are Heirs of God, and Inheritors of the Kingdom of Heaven. But on the Contrary, if we find that we are of a malicious, envious, revengeful, and implacable Temper; that we are given up to any unlawful Lust, any ambitious or sordid Desire; if we give the Reins to our inordinate Passions, and suffer ourselves to be transported beyond all Measure and Reason; if we are of a sordid and narrow Principle, not willing to do good Offices to any Man; if we are factious, turbulent, and seditious,
 uneasy

uneasy to the Government we live un-SERM.
der, and troublesome to our Neigh- XIX.
bours, either by Lying, Backbiting, Tale-
bearing, Envyng, or Railing; of a proud,
censorious, and uncharitable Temper, we
for a Certainty may conclude, that we are
in a wrong Way, that we are the Chil-
dren of our Father the Devil; for these
are the Works of the Flesh, which are
manifest; which are therefore called
the Works of the Devil; and his Ser-
vants we are, whose Work we do:
It will not avail us at the last Day,
though we cry, *Lord, Lord*; though Mat. vii.
we make an open Profession of Reli- 22.
gion; nay, though we have *prophefied*
in his Name, and *in his Name done*
many wonderful Works, i. e. though we
should preach the Gospel to others, and
perform Miracles for the Confirmation
of it; yet, if we do not practise its Pre-
cepts, our Lord and Saviour in that
Day will bid us, *Depart from him*, be-
cause we are *Workers of Iniquity*. If
we allow ourselves in any of these Works
of the Flesh, we cannot be Inhabitants
of the heavenly *Jerusalem*. I do not
say, if we are guilty of any of these
Sins: I would not be mistaken; a good
Man

SERM Man may be guilty of many Sins through
 XIX. the Frailty and Infirmary of his Na-
 ~~~~~ ture; he may be betrayed into grievous  
 and presumptuous Sin, as *David* was;  
 but then he washes the Guilt of it off  
 by a solemn and unfeigned Repentance,  
 he waters his Couch with his Tears,  
 he endeavours to obtain God's Pardon  
 by a long Course of Contrition, and a  
 thorough Reformation of Life, a sin-  
 cere Desire and hearty Endeavour of  
 living better for the Time to come,  
 and of never falling into the same Sin  
 again. He brings forth Fruits meet for  
 Repentance, even those *Fruits of the*  
*Spirit* mentioned in the Text, *Love,*  
*Joy, Peace, Long-suffering, Gentleness,*  
*Goodness, Faith, Meekness, Temperance,*  
*against which there is no Law,* and to  
 which the Word of God promiseth e-  
 ternal Happiness. May we all practise  
 these Virtues, and so obtain the pro-  
 mised Reward, through *Jesus Christ,*  
 the Prince of Peace, our only Mediator  
 and Redeemer. *Amen.*



*The End of the First Volume.*